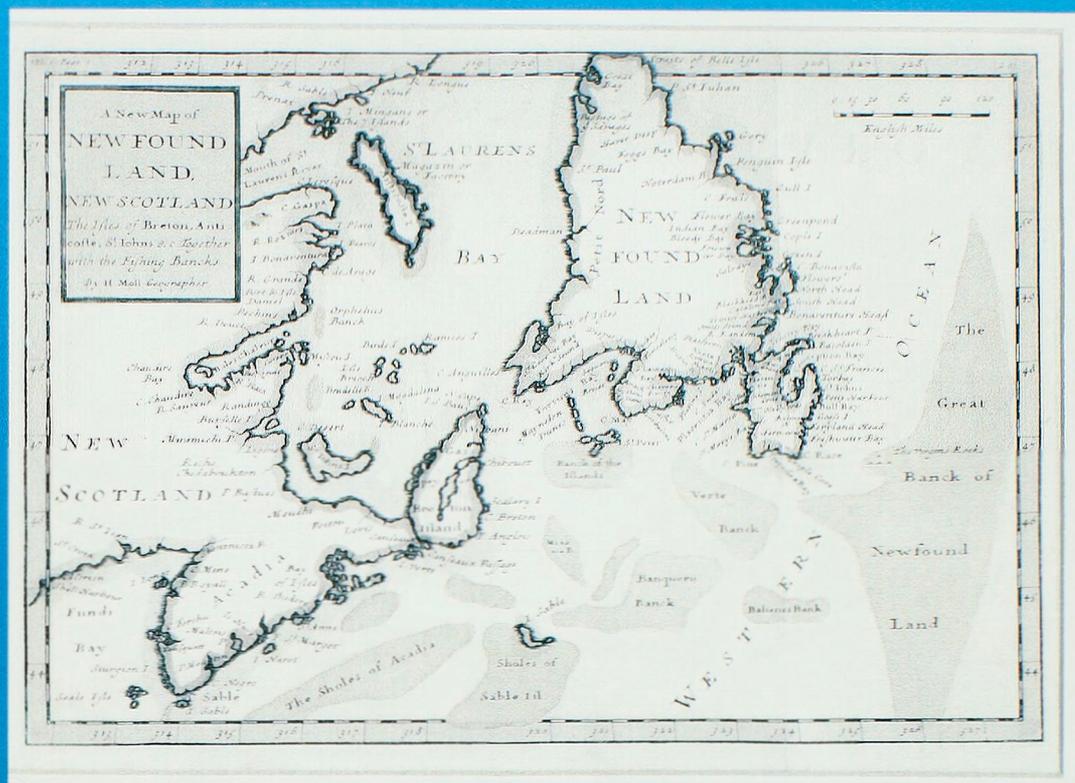


Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association L'Association de linguistique des provinces atlantiques



Proceedings of the 26th Annual Meeting/
Actes du 26e colloque annuel

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**Proceedings of the 26th Annual Meeting
of the Atlantic Provinces
Linguistic Association**

November 8-10, 2002

**Actes du 26^e colloque annuel
de l'association de linguistique
des provinces atlantiques**

8-10 novembre 2002

**Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada**

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The 26th annual conference of the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association was one of the largest and most successful of recent meetings of APLA/ALPA. It owes its success in large measure to the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, in the form of a conference grant. This grant made it possible to invite a number of specialists on the conference theme of literacy, whose presence added much to the intellectual atmosphere and quality of the conference.

Thanks are also extended to the Honourable Judy Foote, the Minister of Education for Newfoundland and Labrador, and to Dr. David Graham, the Dean of Arts of Memorial University - both of whom not only provided financial support, but also delivered welcoming addresses to the conference delegates.

A number of faculties and units of Memorial University also contributed to the success of the conference. The Organizing Committee is indebted to the Faculty of Business for providing us with conference meeting rooms. We would also like to thank the Faculty of Education, and in particular Dr. Roberta Hammett, for assistance in securing the attendance of Dr. John Willinsky, Professor of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Willinsky delivered the annual House lecture on literacy, sponsored by the Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador. The success of our book display was assured by the participation of the Memorial University Bookstore and Memorial's Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) - along with the Newfoundland and Labrador Literacy Development Council and the province's Department of Education.

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Organizing Committee, 26th annual APLA/ALPA meeting:

Sandra Clarke (Chair)
Carrie Dyck
Marguerite MacKenzie
Catherine Penney

PREFACE

The 26th Annual Meeting of the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association (APLA/ALPA) took place on the campus of Memorial University in St. John's, NL, from November 8 - 10, 2002. This conference provided a forum for the discussion of a topic often neglected within the general study of literacy: how linguistics may successfully be applied to literacy issues, specifically, to problems of literacy in aboriginal communities as well as to disordered reading acquisition.

Over the course of the two and a half days of the conference, 43 high-quality papers were delivered, half of them on the conference theme of literacy. Thirteen of these papers were authored or co-authored by graduate students. The plenary Murray Kinloch Memorial Lecture was delivered by Rebecca Treiman (Baker Chair of Child Development Psychology, Washington University in St. Louis), an international expert in the field of reading disorders.

One afternoon session of the conference was dedicated to a panel discussion on community literacy. We would like to thank the following participants for their input to what proved to be a very stimulating discussion: Tom Dawe (Teachers on Wheels), Serena Hancock (Avalon East School Board), Anna Muselius (Association for New Canadians), Virginia Ryan (MUN Writing Centre) and Carmel Smith (College of the North Atlantic).

The following twenty-five papers were also delivered at the conference, but are not included in this volume; a number of them will appear in a special volume on literacy in aboriginal languages, to be edited by Julie Brittain and Barbara Burnaby:

Catharyn Andersen: Literacy and language revitalization in Labrador Inuttut

Anne-Marie Baraby: Rôle actuel de l'écrit dans une langue de traditional orale, l'innu

- Phil Branigan:** How to learn the unlearnable: The syntax of ECM in French
- Julie Brittain:** The role of community-authored texts in the promotion of Aboriginal language literacy
- Vit Bubenik:** Medieval linguistic areas, vertical contact and language change
- Barbara Burnaby:** Linguistics and literacy in Aboriginal languages in Canada
- Wladyslaw Cichocki:** Transcription of continuative intonation tones in Acadian French
- James Drover:** Phonetic-cue reading observed in a delayed reader
- Carrie Dyck & Tracy O'Brien:** Perception and production of approximants as evidence for phonological deficits in dyslexia
- Anne Furlong:** A modest proposal: Linguistics and literary studies
- Anne Hewson:** 'I can tell you're liking this:' Teaching the meaning of grammatical forms to second language learners
- John Hewson:** Evidence for case in the French NP
- Alana Johns:** Oral literacy in Labrador: The role of writing
- Raymond Klein:** Dyslexia, dysdrivia and dystennisia: Is it reasonable to expect everyone to read well?

- Matthieu LeBlanc:** Translation norms: A look at official translation in New Brunswick
- Marguerite MacKenzie:** Syllabic literacy for Cree as a language of instruction
- Mariadelaluz Matus-Mendoza:** Language in the televised media
- Susan Mugford:** The perception and production of /s/+consonant by phonological dyslexics
- Derek Nurse:** Why the morphological shape of the Bantu verb is as it is: How agglutination arises
- Barbara O’Dea:** Literacy issues in Deaf education
- Harold Paddock:** Mixed attitudes towards literacy in the history of Newfoundland
- Louise Péronnet & Sylvia Kasparian:** Etude des prépositions en “français standard” du Nouveau-Brunswick
- Amy Roth:** Cut me some (l)a(t)titude! Linguistic variation in Southern U.S. transplants to New England
- Ian Smith:** Missionary creole and South Asian linguistic culture: Diglossia in 19th century Sri-Lanka Portuguese
- Douglas Wharram:** On the occasional availability of intermediate-scope indefinites in Inuktitut

**I. Linguistic Approaches to Literacy/
Études linguistiques de l'alphabétisation**

Should Literacy be Encouraged in Contexts of Linguistic Endangerment?¹

John Edwards
St Francis Xavier University

1. Introduction

In most contexts, literacy is unreservedly seen as a ‘Good Thing,’ a quantity whose value is universally acknowledged.² In some of its more rarefied manifestations, it is true, literacy can be a rather costly incarnation of language, and one whose higher reaches are often inaccessible to *hoi polloi*. As well, it is undeniable that non-literate societies possess an orality of great nuance and subtlety; the *griots* of West Africa (and their counterparts elsewhere) are the conduits of a rich heritage. Indeed, as we have recently seen in our own country, the words of these living libraries have now been accorded a legal status similar to that of the written record. Notwithstanding, however, the immediacy and scope of orality, literate cultures have – at the very least – an extra linguistic dimension of great power. Indeed, this is putting it much too mildly: many would argue that the historical continuity that shapes and defines a culture rests largely upon literacy. To replace human libraries with books widens access to knowledge, the ability to read permits and encourages varieties of interpretation, literate individuals are the only ones capable of full civic participation, and so on.³

All of this would hardly seem to be worth repeating here. Yet the power and the attractions of literacy – so obvious to members of ‘developed’ societies that they are rarely considered – have been seen as insidious and dangerous for those whose languages and cultures are at risk. At first blush, this seems paradoxical: surely a fully language-competent community is of particular value for a minority group; surely literacy in a threatened language is a source of strength in the face of overbearing linguistic neighbours?

In fact, proponents of the ‘new’ ecology of language have made (or remade) the point that illiteracy can favour cultural and linguistic stability, and some have suggested that the promotion of literacy works against linguistic ‘vitality.’ That is, the championing of threatened varieties does not always sit easily with the endorsement of literacy – this is true in situations in which these varieties are non-literate but, even where literacy

exists, arguments have been made that its spread may be dangerous. This is clearly an area ripe for analysis, since it brings into potential opposition two areas that are both generally considered as ‘Good Things’ – enhancement of literacy and support for beleaguered linguistic communities. My general theme here is that we should be very wary of arguments that even begin to suggest that language maintenance might be purchased at the expense of literacy.

2. The ‘new’ ecology of language

As a term and a focus of study, *ecology* is a coinage of Ernst Haeckel (perhaps as early as the 1860s) and, as its Greek root (*οἶκος* = home) implies, the emphasis is upon the holistic study of environments within which lives are lived and intertwined (for useful discussions predating the general extension to language, see Bates 1953 and Glacken 1967). Haeckel was concerned with the Darwinian struggle for existence within the ‘web’ of life. This includes both the beneficial and inimical interrelationships among plants, animals and, indeed, inorganic surroundings. Ecology is about adaptations, then, whose necessity arises from inevitable linkages. Implicit in the earliest conceptions of this ‘economy of nature’ is the scientific investigation of the conditions constituting environments and, from this perspective, ecological awareness (broadly speaking) is very old. It can be traced, for instance, at least to Aristotelian concepts of ‘design in nature’ and the idea that the world is essentially ordered; it attracted further philosophical and religious elaborations (which argued, for example, that God was the designer), and it underpins contemporary secular science, which replaces divinity with natural laws.⁴

In a predictable extension of a concept which initially focussed upon plants and animals, an ecological anthropology folded culture into the mix, reminding us of the reciprocity between what is given and what is constructed (pre-ecolinguistic sources here include Steward 1955, and Clifton 1968). Again, what is sometimes taken as a modern idea has longstanding roots: Plato and Aristotle, after all, thought that climate was an important factor in human affairs and, in the eighteenth century, Montesquieu built an elaborate philosophy on this basis, a philosophy linking climate (and topography) to all manner of individual and collective traits – from exploratory activity to religion.

The first specific reference to the ecology of language is apparently found in a chapter by Voegelin, Voegelin and Schutz (1967), but the term is particularly associated with Einar Haugen (e.g., 1972). His intent was to emphasise the interconnectedness of languages with their environments, with particular regard to status and function, and he produced a list of contextualising questions – about who uses the language, its domains, varieties, written traditions and family linkages, the degree and type of support it enjoys, and so on (for more details and typological expansions, see Edwards 1992, discussed further by Grenoble and Whaley 1998). In themselves, these questions are neutral in tone. However, in a book forthrightly called *Blessings of Babel*, Haugen refers to a “problem of *social ecology*: keeping alive the variety and fascination of our country, diverting the trend toward steamrolling everything and everyone into a single, flat uniformity” (1987: 11). The dislike of a monotonous landscape is clear, although Haugen’s quotation is not entirely transparent. He probably did not mean to imply that ‘social ecology’ was essentially devoted to the promotion of diversity, but rather that any such promotion would fall within its remit (see also his 1972 collection).

In fact, however, the breadth of the ecology-of-language view, a breadth that would logically follow from its parent discipline, has been progressively reduced and the label of ecology increasingly co-opted. Ecology, to go back no further than Haeckel’s formulation, involves adaptation and struggle within an extremely broad range of relationships. While earlier ‘non-interventionist’ linguistic views often acknowledge a Darwinian sort of linguistic struggle, and while there are some contemporary researchers who would claim an ecological perspective that reflects a range of possibilities (from linguistic health all the way to extinction, perhaps), the field now generally argues for more pacific interaction. As Mühlhäusler (2000: 308) has noted in a recent review article, “functioning ecologies are nowadays characterized by predominantly mutually beneficial links and only to a small degree by competitive relationships ... metaphors of struggle of life and survival of the fittest should be replaced by the appreciation of natural kinds and their ability to coexist and cooperate.” We have a view of a world in which there is room for all languages, where the goodness of diversity is a given, where ‘the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb.’ This is certainly a kinder and gentler picture, but surely the key word here is ‘should,’ surely the key question is whether the desire is also the reality. We could remember

Woody Allen's reworking of that passage from Isaiah: 'the lion and the calf shall lie down together, but the calf won't get much sleep.'

3. *Ecological assumptions*

3.1. *The human factor*

One ecological assumption is that it is human interference which necessitates ecological management and planning; 'healthy ecologies,' we are told by Mühlhäusler, are both "self-organizing" and "self-perpetuating," but "human actions [can] upset the original balance" (2000: 310). We might ask ourselves, first, in what sphere of life human actions have *not* altered things. More pointedly still, what social spheres could there possibly be *without* such actions? It seems like lamenting the fact that we have two ears.

3.2. *Language diversity*

From an ecological point of view, linguistic diversity is taken as an unalloyed good, to be defended wherever it seems to falter. It is a perspective implicit in recent language-rights manifestos, covenants and declarations. These have a chequered provenance, make several sorts of linguistic claims, and have received various degrees of official response (see also below). Beyond the legalistic approach of formal proclamations, however, there are several bases upon which a defense of diversity can rest, and Mühlhäusler (2000) has usefully categorised these, in moral, scientific, economic and aesthetic terms.

The morality of diversity – apart, that is, from assumptions of inherent rights which are implicated in moral argument – suggests that language attrition means loss of accumulated experience and knowledge. Secondly, it is argued that multilingual societies reach higher levels of achievement, and that linguistic 'encounters' aid scientific advance. This in turn suggests that language diversity is economically beneficial; it is noted, more specifically, that emphasis placed upon lesser-used varieties will prove more worthwhile than simply broadening the base of those who learn 'big' varieties. Finally, an aesthetic appreciation values all diversity, and regrets all loss. Although other arguments altogether can be made, and although

the substantiation of these four themselves could be done along different lines, the assumptions made here are quite typical. All are debatable.

3.3. *Language rights*

Ecological organisations formed expressly for the protection of endangered languages – the American Terralingua society, for example, or the Foundation for Endangered Languages, based in England – typically have a charter or a statement of intent stressing linguistic rights. The former, for instance, observes that “deciding which language to use, and for what purposes, is a basic human right” (Terralingua 1999). As well, existing language associations have argued for rights. The most recent example is that of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) which, in November 2000, passed a resolution advocating that “all groups of peoples have the right to maintain their native language ... a right to retain and use [it].” The other side of the coin, they argue, is that “the governments and the people of all countries have a special obligation to affirm, to respect and support the retention, enhancement and use of indigenous and immigrant heritage languages ...” Such specialised manifestos typically draw upon charters endorsed by the United Nations, the European Union and other international bodies. One of the great unresolved problems here – indeed, one which is, rather conveniently, hardly ever mentioned is this: *while it may be possible to legislate rights to speak, how might we ensure rights to be understood?* The first without the second is but a hollow victory.

3.4. *Biological analogies*

In the Irish revival effort of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the close association of the language with Catholicism – Irish was, for example, seen to be “the casket which encloses the highest and purest religion”, and “the instrument and expression of a purely Catholic culture” (see Edwards 1995: 113-114) – involved two central elements. The first is the belief that a particular language and a particular religion (or culture) are indeed linked. The second – which logically flows from the first but which can certainly be exploited even in the absence of that strong initial belief – is that it makes good sense to try and bolster a weak or disputed quantity (here, Irish) by linking it with a stronger cultural pillar (Catholicism). This is an analogy that occurs to me when considering another broad ecological assumption: the linkage made between linguistic

diversity and its biological counterpart. It is clearly valuable to proclaim this linkage in a world increasingly aware of environmental issues; the advantages of adding anxieties about language decline to concerns with pollution, loss of plant and animal habitats and industrial depredation are obvious. But how reasonable, in fact, is this addition?

At a metaphoric level, the association works well enough. Doesn't diversity make the world richer and more interesting, and isn't linguistic diversity one part of a larger attractive mosaic? And, if we intervene to save the whales, or to clean up oil spills – or, indeed, to keep historic buildings from the wrecker's ball, or to repair and preserve rare books and manuscripts – then why should we not also stem language decline, ensure a future for all varieties, prevent larger languages from swallowing smaller ones, and so on? A popular case could theoretically be made here, even one based solely upon moral and aesthetic arguments.

Recent ecological arguments, however, have attempted to make the link between linguistic and other types of diversity much more than metaphoric. This might be thought to return us to those other rationales – scientific and economic – already noted: after all, the case for saving whales and reducing carbon emissions is not only made on moral or ethical grounds, but also rests upon practical, forward-looking and economic arguments. But a rather more pointed suggestion has been made. Harmon (1996) and others feel that there may be more than analogy between linguistic and biological diversity, that areas in the world rich in one are also extensive in the other, that the two diversities are “mutually supportive, perhaps even coevolved” (Maffi 2000: 175). Setting aside difficulties of measurement and interpretation, we should be reminded here of the classic principle that correlation need not imply causation.

Dubious argument apart, there is in any event a practical problem that purported linkages between animals and languages cannot overcome: it is much more difficult to maintain the latter than it is to preserve the former. I don't mean to say, of course, that saving rare species is easy. But, when we have been able to muster sufficient resources and to garner enough support, we *have* intervened with some success in the lives of snails and whales. We have passed regulations forbidding some sorts of hunting and fishing, and allowing stocks to recover. We have forbidden the importation of materials whose removal damages the environment elsewhere. We have outlawed clear-cutting and prescribed reforestation. It is clear enough that

we haven't always done very well, that the environment continues to be harmed in important ways, and so on. But we have a potential level of control here that is impossible with human societies and their languages – unless, of course, we were willing to act in the dictatorial ways (benevolent though they may be) that are open to us with plants and animals.

3.5. *Ecology and bilingualism*

Linguistic conservation, preservation and maintenance are generally considered, in ecologically-minded perspectives, to be basic human rights – but it is interesting that the desire for language diversity that unites many under the ecological banner is not an argument for monolingualism. Those who wish to see an extended future for the small languages of the world no longer propose – if, indeed, they ever seriously did – that Welsh or Frisian, Haida or Mi'kmaq, will be sufficient for their speakers' purposes and aspirations across all domains. Arguments now are not for existence *per se* but, more precisely, for the coexistence of the lions and the calves.

Bilingualism is, of course, a reasonable response to a desire for such coexistence – reasonable on theoretical grounds, and reasonable in the *de facto* sense that more people in the world are bilingual (or better) than are monolingual. It is also worth restating the truisms that bilingualism *per se* involves no cognitive penalties, that it is a capacity that can be almost effortlessly acquired by the youngest of children, and that the lack of education (and, indeed, illiteracy) of most of the world's multilinguals further attests to its unexceptional character. Bilingualism is not rocket science. It is an obvious and practical means of dealing with diversity. The question is not whether bilingualism *can* allow people to enjoy a social and psychological duality – the answer is clear. The question is whether bilingualism *will* have this function, particularly where small languages are involved.

There are two basic considerations here: (a) weaker varieties may have to be stabilised (or rejuvenated, or revived), and (b) the duality of the smaller and the larger languages has to have some hope, at least, of an enduring diglossic relationship. The first of these is always theoretically possible, if not always practicable, and the second is often problematic. Bilingualism, as we know very well, is frequently a way-station on the road to new linguistic arrangements. While it is a linguistic truism that all languages can be adjusted as their speakers' needs dictate, it is a social and

political one that, because of the fortunes of their speakers, some languages are stronger than others. The language decline that is at the heart of the issue here is often a *symptom* of contact between groups of unequal power, an effect of a larger cause. It follows that attempts to arrest it are difficult: you don't cure measles by covering up the spots. The logical – indeed, the ecological – approach is to unpick the social fabric that has evolved, and which has brought about language decline, and reweave it into a new pattern. But while this is possible, it is also difficult, inasmuch as those concerned to stem decline often want only some selected reworking of social evolution, not wholesale revolution. Overall, the implication is that a stable diglossia between smaller and larger varieties is difficult to ensure, especially in an era of change and mobility.

Isolation and lack of mobility – not generally thought desirable, one imagines – are often prerequisites for language maintenance. In Austro-Hungary, Mühlhäusler (2000) tells us, lack of mobility reinforced linguistic ecological stability. On the other hand, we recall that migrations – from the old to the new world, for example – have generally exacted linguistic and cultural tolls. Is stasis the price of ethnolinguistic continuity? It might well be so. Certainly, if people are willing to remain in an isolated condition, the possibilities for long-term bilingualism are more propitious. Indeed, isolation has not only stabilised bilingualism, it has very often accounted for the endurance of monolingualism in the original variety. Twenty years ago, Fishman noted:

Stable bilingualism and biculturism cannot be maintained on the basis of open and unlimited interaction between minorities and majorities. Open economic access and unrestricted intergroup interaction may be fine for various practical and philosophical purposes. Indeed, they strike most of us as highly desirable legal and social principles; but they are destructive of minority ethnolinguistic continuity (Fishman 1980: 171).

I have cited this quotation before, because it seems to summarise the situation quite well. Here is an avowed supporter of minority languages, of stable bilingualism, of 'ethnolinguistic continuity,' suggesting that the price of stability is higher than most have evidently been willing to pay. Curious, to say the least, that open access and interaction are seen as 'fine' – these are the sorts of things that people struggle and migrate for, not simply desirable principles. Would we advocate voluntary minority-group self-

segregation – as has appealed to a handful of groups, generally along religious lines – or would we take steps to ensure that Gaelic speakers never get off Cape Breton, remaining in their island fastness for the sake of their language and culture?

4. *Endangered languages and literacy*

4.1 *Local voices*

In areas where academic enquiry touches more or less immediately upon daily life and, more particularly, where it deals with aspects of life that are highly-charged, contentious or threatened, it is always salutary to examine the views of the ‘ordinary’ people themselves. In the matter of literacy, these views do not always sit easily with those expressed in (some parts of) the literature. Among many papers presented at the conference of the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association held at Memorial University in November 2002 – in which language and literacy was the central theme – several bore upon this matter. At a general level, for example, Alana Johns and Catharyn Andersen each discussed matters of literacy in Labrador, where it is clear that the role of literacy in programmes of language revival and revitalisation is a complex one. Barbara Burnaby noted the coexistence of local support for literacy in powerful varieties (here, English and French) and local resistance to native literacies. This coexistence is an historically familiar one, simply reflecting perceptions of linguistic power, on the one hand, and feelings of linguistic inadequacy, on the other. But the coexistence *also* reflects the more contemporary fear that literacy ‘opens up’ a language and a culture, and thus facilitates ‘voice appropriation’ by outsiders.

Julie Brittain discussed a more specific feature – the production of books *in and by* the community itself. This is a doubly-important matter, involving not only community endorsement of books in the local language (Naskapi, in this case) but also a willingness to take a leading part. It is one thing to rather passively accept an idea – often broached by a small number of individuals within the group or, indeed, by interested outsiders – and such a reactive stance is, in fact, quite common among relatively small or powerless populations. It is quite another, however, to take some active control; this quantity can range from a general readiness to play a role to a demand that nothing be done without insider approval and action, that the

input and expertise of any outsiders involved always remain at the service of the community. To return, however, to Brittain's paper itself: it was clear that the Naskapi speech community itself valued literacy and its ramifications – and a sense of how the written word might encourage the oral varieties of an endangered vernacular took two forms. First, as an extended and formalised involvement with the language, the activity of reading is, in and of itself, seen as a support for more informal usage. Secondly, reading – or, more accurately, the existence of material to read – is a status marker. This is true even if not all in the community can read, or if some of the books (dictionaries are a good example here) are 'too difficult' for most readers; indeed, both historical and contemporary observation indicates that restricted access to the written word commonly enhances its status. And nowadays this status is complemented by the prestige – largely deriving from the allure of modernity – associated with computers and those who can use them.

We find these North American descriptions usefully supplemented by recent work from farther afield. Terrill (2002) describes her work on Lavukaleve, an island in the Solomons that is home to about 1700 people. While a written form of Lavukaleve exists, the literacy level is very low, and the written language is principally associated with religious exercises. In an effort to expand the scope of literacy, various new materials were produced, the most important being a Lavukaleve dictionary. Discussing the involvement of the islanders in this project, Terrill makes three very interesting points:

- (i) the fact that neighbouring islanders already had a dictionary was a powerful motivation for the Lavukalevese. There was great interest in the ideal of the dictionary somehow marking the validity of their language;
- (ii) matters of *content* were less important than considerations of *size* – the bigger the better;
- (iii) the inclusion of novel or difficult words was seen as a further indication of the dictionary's value – restricted access to its profundities only adds to its symbolic weight.

Far from viewing these attitudes as trivial and superficial, Terrill points out that literacy-as-symbol is very important. In general, it has the potential to

stimulate positive feelings about one's small, unimportant or beleaguered variety. More specifically, "acknowledging and utilizing powerful cultural symbols ... is a useful way to encourage language maintenance, and it is one way to halt the pattern of language endangerment that is creeping into some communities" (217).

4.2. *The new ecolinguistic perspective*

What results when the 'new' ecology leaves the study and goes out into the field? We find arguments *for* illiteracy, on the grounds that it abets the linguistic stability touched upon above. Thus, Mühlhäusler (2000) has criticised arguments that link literacy to 'empowerment,' and has noted that its development may be dangerous for the preservation of linguistic diversity. He goes a bit further when he approvingly cites a source arguing that literacy promotion actually works against 'linguistic vitality' (355; see also the extended discussion in Mühlhäusler 1996). In Maffi (2000), we find a citation to work (by Abram 1997) which emphasises the importance of orality for the persistence of indigenous varieties. (Is it irrelevant, I wonder, to note that Abram's book is entitled *The Spell of the Sensuous?*).

Literacy is often seen as a sort of bully, in the same way that large languages are the villains, and small ones the victims: written varieties can push oral ones aside, writing is seen as sophisticated and, indeed, more likely to bear the truth, and so on. It is also sometimes seen as a sort of Trojan horse. Rhydwen (1998), for instance, feels that speakers of at-risk varieties can be falsely lulled into security once writing arrives. It is certainly reasonable to point out the cruel fallacy that literacy inevitably leads to social or political improvement, or to refer to the single-mindedness of literacy campaigns. It is also true that writing does not automatically augment veracity (do you believe everything you read in the papers?). But might we not worry that it would be an instance of 'isolationism' to try and purchase language maintenance at the expense of literacy?

A related point suggests that formal education is not always the ally of enduring diversity and bilingualism. Benton (1981: 171) doubts that "schools can have any positive role in ensuring the continued viability of Oceanic languages" (the 'can' and 'any' are interesting here; in his endorsement of the statement, Mühlhäusler [1996: 267] is more circumspect, saying that "it is probably not difficult to agree with Benton that education and school language policies have done little ..."). These

authors are presumedly not against education *per se*. Rather, they wish to draw our attention to its often intrusive qualities, to its championing of literacy over orality, to the way in which it imposes foreign (i.e., western) values and methods upon small cultures. Again there is the idea of cultural bullying. Maffi (2000: 177) notes, for example, that formal education need not come “at the expense of learning traditional knowledge” and, indeed, that school is not the only venue for the acquisition of “valuable knowledge.” These notes are, of course, unexceptionable, and presumably would not have been made in the absence of the juggernaut power of education.

It is not difficult to sympathise with laments about supposedly intrusive ‘foreign’ education paradigms but since all education worthy of the name is multicultural in nature the argument may be self-defeating. Formal education necessarily involves broadening the horizons, going beyond what is purely local and ‘traditional.’ In an unequal world – one whose disparities create risks for languages, in fact – education will perforce become yet another evidence of those disparities. Those concerned with gaining a place in the media for minority languages have learned that they are double-edged swords: while it is clear that access to them is important, they also facilitate the transmission of those larger influences upon decline. There are similar ‘risks’ associated with the medium of education.

If we return here to Oceania, we find – in the work of Terry Crowley (1999, 2000, 2002) – some of the most pointed and relevant observations. Crowley’s initial focus is upon lexicography, and he notes that some of the ‘new’ ecologists of language disapprove of lexicographic efforts *tout court*; they are seen as insidious interventions by outsiders, ones that threaten the stability of traditional linguistic patterns:

[lexicography] can constitute a very serious trespass ... The very view that languages can be counted and named may be part of the disease that has affected the linguistic ecology of the Pacific (Mühlhäusler 1996: 5).

This is a remarkably broad statement and one which, as a western linguist and lexicographer himself, Crowley took to heart. Indeed, he felt ‘particularly stung’ by it, he tells us (2002: 9), and his annoyance here is doubtless heightened by Mühlhäusler’s rather curious position vis-à-vis

other area scholars (see especially notes 10 and 12 in Crowley 2000). As he had observed a little earlier (Crowley 1999: 8), the assertion here is

that the mere acts of naming, identifying and describing languages seriously undermines the interrelationships between languages which he [Mühlhäusler] refers to as traditional ‘linguistic ecologies.’ The production of dictionaries by Western linguists is, in effect, part of a series of colonial acts which lead in the end to complete language shift.

As Crowley goes on to discuss, such an attitude highlights a number of issues, of which the most central are the general desire (that we have already noted here) of local communities precisely *for* outside assistance in lexical matters, and the more theoretical questions concerning just how ‘naming’ and ‘describing’ a language hastens its disappearance.

But there is a still more general objection raised by the ‘new’ ecologists, one that encompasses lexicography *per se*. In summarising the ideas of Mühlhäusler (1996, 2000), Charpentier (1997) and others, Crowley (2000: 368) points out that they are claiming

that literacy in the Pacific does not give added status to vernaculars and that it should be discouraged because it is not part of traditional cultures ... weakening these languages, leading ultimately to ... replacement ... by colonial languages.

But Crowley’s view is just the opposite: attempts to discourage vernacular literacy are romantic exercises involving a past that is no longer recoverable – if, indeed, it ever existed as imagination depicts it – and, based as they are on such shaky foundations, perhaps are weakening agents themselves. These attempts also ignore genuine and pressing local wishes and needs, they erect simplistic divisions between outsiders and insiders, they incorrectly assume that the acquisition of literacy signals dramatic cultural discontinuity, and so on.

The thread that seems to connect all the assumptions made by the ‘new ecolinguistics’ is the idea that there is – or was – some virginal *ordre naturel* (see, for example, Mühlhäusler 1996: 264) that has been or will be corrupted, debased and ultimately destroyed by western interventions, interventions that are not even motivated primarily by the interests of the

supposed beneficiaries. This is quite simply wrong. Commenting upon this from his own Pacific Islands perspective, Crowley (2000: 377) notes that we are seeing here an

assumption that there is only one unchanging way of being Melanesian ... [this is] a position of extreme naïveté which would be rejected outright by any informed anthropologist.

It is of course a common enough attitude – hardly restricted to anthropology – that naïvely embraces what is small, remote, simple, that typically finds virtue in the past and vice in the present.⁵ This larger canvas of preference and prejudice is illustrated in a final citation from Crowley:

let us for the moment assume the worst case scenario, namely that Mühlhäusler is correct in his dire predictions for the languages of the Pacific. Some of the major weaknesses that he sees in the current linguistic ecologies of the region are factors such as intermarriage, education, the adoption of Christianity, the media, internal migration, administrative centralisation and urbanisation (Mühlhäusler 1996: 50). From this, it could be argued that in order for languages to be protected, steps should be taken to discourage (or even prohibit) intermarriage. Formal education should either be abolished, or it should be completely reorganised to exclude introduced languages such as English or French. People should be required to abandon Christianity and revert to their traditional religions. The media should either be closed down, or there should be separate media outlets for every single vernacular (or even every single variety of every vernacular). Internal migration should cease, and towns should perhaps even be abandoned.

Such draconian measures have not typically been employed, although Crowley does cite one recent instance; still, as he says, “Pol Pot’s Cambodian experiment is perhaps not the most desirable model for the Pacific” (2002: 14).

5. Conclusions

While it is true that there are other approaches – often denigrated by contemporary ecolinguistics, incidentally (see Edwards 2001) – to language

politics and planning and, hence, to matters of literacy for ‘small’ varieties, an increasingly powerful current is that which brings the ‘new’ ecology to bear in contexts of linguistic endangerment. The most problematic elements here are assumptions that cast doubt upon the value of literacy for small or threatened languages and cultures. This doubt, and its underpinnings, are generally enshrined in a concern with the allegedly destructive power of external forces, forces that literacy will unleash. But, as I have implied here – particularly, of course, in my heavy and favourable reliance upon Crowley’s insights – the position is, to say the least, incompletely thought out.

The stance of the ‘new’ ecology is one, I believe, that is romantically ahistorical, naïve, ostrich-like in its ignorance of broader currents and essentially retrogressive in tone. Its influence, where it exists, is one that either neglects on-the-ground desires and expectations or raises them in a manner such that they can only be subsequently dashed. Its hope is apparently for a social stasis, a sort of entombment in cultural amber, that has never proved popular for more than a tiny element in any population. Further, it often suggests that some sort of return to a more innocent and uncontaminated time would be a highly desirable event, a time when the noble savage was still uncorrupted. But to evoke this image is in fact unfair to Rousseau. He never used the phrase and, more to the point, never implied that some ‘return to nature’ was either possible or desirable. The educational programme he outlines in his *Émile*, for instance, testifies to his belief that the only plausible direction is forward. This is an insight apparently denied to proponents of the ‘new’ ecolinguistics.

Notes

1. For fuller treatment of some of the themes discussed here – particularly in the early parts of the paper – see Edwards (2001, 2002a, 2002b). These earlier articles also clarify why I consistently put the adjective in the phrase, *the new ecology of language*, in quotation marks.

Harold Paddock’s paper at the 2002 annual meeting of the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association reminds us that varying perspectives on literacy are not only a feature of impoverished societies, or of oral ones, or of those whose languages are endangered. Literacy can, for example, ‘mark’ one group within a larger society and come to be

associated with other, and more immediately important, markers. Thus, Paddock notes that Newfoundland literacy was an urban feature, and one linked to Irish Catholicism; rural and English-Protestant areas were marked by low rates of literacy. (This, of itself, is an interesting observation since, in other contexts, Protestantism, not Catholicism, is more associated with literacy. Perhaps the Newfoundland findings reported by Paddock have more to do with the urban-rural distinction than with religious divisions.) Furthermore, the values of rural life – which were founded (for males at any rate) on heavy physical work and little education or leisure – meant that literacy was often stigmatized as a rather effeminate quality, likely to be found only among teachers, merchants and clerics. I am reminded here of George Orwell’s observation (1964: 74) that “nearly every Englishman of working-class origin considers it effeminate to pronounce foreign words correctly.”

2. With acknowledgement of the insights of Jane Austen and, more importantly, W.C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman, authors of the celebrated *1066 And All That* (1930). Their subtitle is ‘A Memorable History of England, Comprising All the Parts You Can Remember, Including One Hundred and Three Good Things, Five Bad Kings and Two Genuine Dates.’ If they had discussed it, literacy would clearly have been the hundred-and-fourth Good Thing. Sellar and Yeatman, incidentally, anticipated by some sixty years Francis Fukuyama’s famous thesis (1992). As they say (in their ‘Compulsory Preface’), “history is now at an end ... this History is therefore final.”
3. Sarah Rose’s interesting paper, which appears in this volume, points out that cultural contrasts between literate and non-literate societies are not solely recent phenomena and, more importantly, that such contrasts do not always point to an unequivocal superiority for the former. In Vedic India, cultural transmission was oral; it wasn’t that writing in Sanskrit didn’t exist, but rather that it was seen as an insufficiently dignified medium for such high purposes, or as something needed only by those of restricted intellectual power. This is a curious notion in modern eyes, and even more curious, perhaps, is that Pāṇini, the great Sanskrit grammarian was – like Homer – unable to read or write his own language. (This is a commonly-held view, although Pinault’s [1996: 692] biographical account notes, rather cryptically, that “writing was certainly known to Pāṇini.” It is clear enough, though, that Pāṇini’s grammar was meant to be *recited* [it took some three hours] and then

memorized.) But the connection of the written word with mundane motivation is entirely consistent with our belief that writing systems generally emerged because of the requirements of commerce.

In the Anatolian world of the Hittites, the many tablets testify to the power of writing. Akkadian and other cuneiform script, as found largely on rectangular pieces of clay (or sometimes wood or metal) shaped to fit the hand – early ‘palm pilots,’ as Rose observes – was essentially (though not exclusively) the production of a skilled scribal class. Records were kept of everything, from literature to legislation, from culture to commerce.

The interesting comparison between oral India and literate Anatolia is that wide-spread writing does not seem to have materially benefitted or extended Hittite civilization. In many ways, indeed, Vedic culture (which was not transmitted in writing) was the more original of the two. The comparison, which could of course take in other cultures as well, suggests that, in Rose’s words, “written literacy may not be all that it’s cracked up to be.” This may well be true in some rich oral cultures, and this truth may extend over quite a long time. But in the longest of runs, however, literacy ‘fixes’ a culture. Beyond the value here for future historians and other scholars, literacy also ‘benefits later generations’ in the given culture itself. This reminds us that even the most orally rich of cultures may be more susceptible to the degradation of records. As well, most literate cultures have in fact developed from non-literate ones – the suggestion is, then, that transitions from orality to literacy are generally viewed as progress.

4. Ernst Heinrich Haeckel (1834-1919), eminent philosopher and zoologist, was the first German biologist to accept the idea of evolution. Darwin held him in high regard, and credited him with propagating the theory in Germany. Haeckel is also associated with the ‘biogenetic law,’ which states that ‘ontogenesis is a brief and rapid recapitulation of phylogenesis’ – or, in the more motto-like form familiar to several generations of students, ‘ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.’
5. One recalls here those famous lines from Koko’s song in *The Mikado*: “the idiot who praises with enthusiastic tone / all centuries but this, and every country but his own.”

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Language, Literacy and Communication in Nigeria: Minority Languages and National Development

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1. Rationale

The rationale for the reflections that follow resides in the compelling arguments for a thorough inventory and glottopolitical treatment of the essential elements nourishing the groundswell of demands in favour of an active, functionally relevant development of literacy in minority languages in Nigeria. Equally of relevance is the attempt, on a macro-linguistic level, to marshal the arguments for what is feasible, practical, practicable, and sensible in the quest to accommodate every possible tool necessary to ensure mass participation in the national development process. Sadly, the latter is often left in the hands of political opportunists, and thus articulated through a web of falsely representative political and administrative processes.

We therefore pursue a premise that relies on the positive evidence that multiculturalism, pluralism and multilingualism remain immutable facts of African life, which elements must be harnessed for national development. Bamgbose (1994:33-43, *infra*) spares us a rehash of the perennial arguments against this assertion, as he effectively debunks the myths about language, national integration and development.

Therefore, ineluctably recommending itself is a critical deconstruction of current terms of reference, and a preference for local level perspectives, with emphasis on practice and actual usage (Fardon and Furniss 1994). This point invariably suggests a purposefully pragmatic, local (grassroots) sponsorship of a remodeled understanding of the local need in relation to the programmatic implementation of existing policies at the national level.

With the benefit of over four decades of post-colonial experience, during which period nothing but pitiable progress has been recorded, this time is as auspicious as any to critically examine the legacy of language planning with the singular view of jettisoning worst practices in favour of the modalities that are socially and culturally responsible and relevant. To achieve this, it therefore becomes manifest that in Nigeria we must consider language as a political object, as a subject of discourse in a myriad of

avenues of usage, and in its misunderstood relevance in national development.

2. Majority/minority languages dichotomy in Nigeria

In contemplating the relative place and role of minority languages in the Nigerian polity, three observations are indispensable, to wit.

Firstly, the laboriously rethreaded dichotomy between majority and minority languages in Nigeria is arbitrary (Bamgbose 1984:21). While the number of speakers jump to mind, such division is also based on other considerations such as literacy, political, or educational status. This assertion is exemplified by the allusion to the selection of Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo as the three major / national languages, a designation also ineptly peddled as their confirmation as official languages, along with English, out of more than 400 languages. While these languages are evidently spoken more than all others on a per capita basis, they also share their additional characteristics outlined above with a fourth language, Efik, considered by current measurements as a minority language. This is not exclusive to Nigeria.

In Ghana, there exists an analogy. Four majority languages are recognized – Twi, Fante (a dialect cluster of Akan), Ewe and Ga – on the basis of their written tradition and prestige as examination subjects at the end of the secondary school cycle. Two other languages, however, Guan and Adangbe, are excluded from the majority language category, even though they have an even higher number of speakers than Ga.

Secondly, and following out of the foregoing argument, the minority/majority distinction is relative. To illustrate this observation, a language deemed to be minority at the federal level may assume majority status on a different administrative level, such as national (employed in its acceptation depicting nations within the Nigerian federal polity) or state, as represented by the case of Efik in the Cross River and Akwa Ibom states. Furthermore, majority languages within different national or political boundaries may be much smaller than minority languages in other polities. Other cases exist in which political considerations inform such definition parameters. Kaplan and Baldauf Jr. (1997:14-27) highlight this imbroglio as they grapple with the terminological difficulties inherent in the initial

basis for language planning. From the authors, we may extract the following four groups of definitional criteria. The political criteria encompass languages of wider communication, national language, official (usually marking instances where languages are unwilling to cede supremacy) and literary languages, regional languages and perhaps, religious languages. Next are social definitions which subsume educational languages, vernacular, classical and historical languages. The third group, the educational definition category, includes foreign languages, second languages and mother tongues for educational purposes. The fourth group concerns popular definitions that refer to foreign languages as languages not spoken within the polity, native languages, usually in reference to majority populations on historical grounds and 'foreigner languages' spoken by transient foreigners in the community. In this last group is also pidgin, normally associated with a lack of systematic grammar and a restrictive lexicon.

Thirdly, and lastly in the minority/majority distinction, the term 'minority language' is often loaded with ideological inferences borne out of a myriad of power, political and economic considerations. However, it must be noted, as evident in the stridently unified voice of political figures and professionals of substance in the South-South geopolitical grouping of Nigeria, that the combined strength of minority languages can be potent. Brann (1985) alludes to the diachronic overloading of the term, in addition to the territorial and political considerations that have endured. The effect of these extraneous considerations, as it were, quite apart from a sheer statistical weighting of the languages at play, cannot be dismissed.

The foregoing observations render it unavoidable to situate discussions such as ours in the "context of the allotted function of a language in a country's language policy" (Bamgbose 1984:22). For instance, a majority language status can, expectedly, be conferred on a national language. In consequence, such a language would almost certainly be employed in secondary and tertiary education, or in communication (e.g. in political discourse) and administration at the national level. Conversely, a minority language may equally be used in primary education and in adult literacy programmes in a way specifically designed to respond to an important local need left unmet, or in direct recognition of antecedent and prevailing political realities within a given polity. In the latter case, Desheriev (1973) writes on the tripartite classification in the former USSR of major, medium-sized and minority languages (see also Isayev 1977). The first category was

used at all levels of education, the second up to secondary and the third in elementary and adult literacy only. For good cause, the scope of the last category can be broadened in Nigeria by a conscious effort to tackle the pervasive literacy deficit at the local level. The resulting dearth of the advantages of literacy invariably impedes political participation of the affected communities who have to rely on unscrupulous politicians who feign a noble desire to act on behalf of marginalized communities.

3. Literacy and language choice

In Nigeria, the overall literacy project cannot be separated from the exploitation of language policies in relation to the multiplex of social and political, if constitutional realities. The 1979 Constitution recognizes the importance of language policies with teeth, as have its several reincarnations. The majority status confers on the majority languages their use in the National Assembly and other high state functions, quite apart from English, at the national and state levels. But, by the same token, the National Policy on Education prescribes the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community as the medium of instruction in the primary schools. It also exhorts every child to learn one of the three major languages of the country. Although the policy appears reticent, if not ambivalent, about which languages to be used in adult literacy classes, it does clearly state “that in character and content all mass literacy programmes will be adapted in each case to local cultural and sociological conditions” (National Policy on Education, 1981:32). This has been severally interpreted to include the use of local languages in literacy programmes across the country. More often than not, these grandiose and lofty positions turn out to be mere insinuations since no concerted effort is clearly discernible in the development and implementation of relevant policies. This is another confirmation of the gulf between language politics (mere words) and language planning (road map to concretize stated ideals and targets) and language policy (specific government-backed implementation strategies).

Another factor that may affect the choice of language for literacy concerns the goal envisaged for the literacy programme. This leads to the separation by literacy specialists of traditional literacy from functional literacy. One of several UNESCO documents spanning 1969-1971, however, posits that traditional literacy could be offered in isolation, since it is aimed at all illiterates (UNESCO survey, 1969-71). Its goal is in the

main “humanistic, and the adult is declared literate upon satisfying the conditions of the prescribed tests” (Bamgbose 1984:22) at the end of the programme. Functional literacy, on the other hand, should be part of a broader development effort. But it is consciously selective (since it is offered to those who can benefit and contribute most to development as a result of being literate). As such, it extends beyond mere certification for work, as it is by extension an initial step in a continuing process of learning in the bid to enhance social status. This dividend, achieved via targeted literacy programmes, should therefore be extended more widely into the acquisition of the enabling linguistic tools necessary for optimal participation in the political processes mediated by language and language use.

Whatever attention literacy in minority mother tongues has received thus far in Nigeria, it has indubitably materialized under the rubric of traditional literacy. Whatever minimal success there has been in overall minority language literacy, it has tended to occur to the extent that local effort has been sustained. It therefore is unambiguous that learning to read, write and count is best achieved using a language in which the learner already enjoys some oral proficiency, irrespective of cases in which such languages are yet to have a fully developed written form. The need to read in a language often leads to modest efforts that spur further development of its written form. It is more difficult to sustain the argument that these languages should simply make way for the major and more developed languages in these minority enclaves, a term we employ advisedly to accentuate the isolation which is the lot of these minority communities.

The role of the linguist in this enterprise is increasingly and urgently central in order to ascertain the viability of smaller languages. Where necessary, emphasis could shift to the more restricted and targeted functional literacy. Such a decision would depend on several factors as in the case of utility in the workplace, or in the wider role played in the community, should that become the immediately identifiable need. Rural realities and urbanization might also dictate the adoption or rejection of a local, indigenous minority language in favor of a second language more useful in the factory situation, for instance. It could just as well become imperative to maintain certain constants in order to preserve or conserve the existing ecology of a specific territory in the overall linguistic landscape.

Functional literacy in its received characterization has led to the homogenization of an assortment of needs, such as in agricultural extension, occupational training, and health and rural development schemes. It has thus inadvertently led to the limitation of literacy resources, a narrowing of the philosophical and epistemic foundations and objectives of literacy, thereby reducing it to the sole parameter of immediate job needs in a community, or polity at large. As a result, input from literacy specialists and linguists are subordinated to the whims of practitioners in the areas from which skills and content are drawn. Bamgbose (1984:23) cites an extreme Nigerian case in which two years after the 1982 launch of the mass literacy campaign to eradicate adult illiteracy, contributions from linguists had not been sought in an organized fashion, in a classic struggle for turf.

It is worth reiterating that, irrespective of approaches, literacy still hinges on the acquisition of language skills such as reading and writing in whatever specialized domain and language it occurs. To infer, even remotely, that these skills are incidental or ancillary to literacy is to perpetuate a misconception fuelled by the long held emphasis on a restrictive definition of functional literacy unduly limited to the factory environment. The functionality of literacy exemplified in meaningful and realistic participation in the processes of a shaky and nascent democracy such as Nigeria is important to minority territories. In fact, it ensures the survival of these communities, and guarantees them a place at the table of resource allocation in the sharing of the 'national cake.' It is about sharing and contributing to the national development in a polity into which colonial history has thrust these minorities.

4. Language and national development

We now turn to questions of national development. Bamgbose (1994:37), as others have done, dispels myths about language and development. To do so, he reminds that national development is almost always described in terms of economic growth, attainment of economic targets, increase in GNP or GDP, rise per capita income, etc., as in the treatise by Allardt (1973:268-71). Indicators of national development are thus referenced against sectoral allocations of resources, such as industry, defense, education, technology, administration, communication, etc. Societal goals within this conceptual reference embrace economic prosperity and growth as expressed in per capita and employment rates,

political efficiency, political participation and modernization efforts. In Nigeria, for instance, these are supposed to trickle down to the local levels through an inefficient process dominated by a corrupt, ineffective and narcissistic bureaucracy spawned and condoned by a broken public and political infrastructure (one must have lived in Nigeria to appreciate this remark). Little wonder, therefore, that national development, viewed through these prisms of modernization and revitalization, remains calcified and farcical.

Individual goals, on the other hand, are expressed in terms of level of welfare, private consumption, housing and spending, life expectancy, freedom to choose jobs or belong to organizations and political movements, etc. This extends to a slate of individual cultural and linguistic groupings. The freedom to communicate in a viable local language cannot be excluded.

However complete the above enumeration is viewed, it remains a parochial concept of development which, in spite of the assumed role and place of language, fails to delineate the role of language. It is defective in its inability to harmonize its modalities and goals with the ideals of smaller and often insular minority groups. Thus, this disservice unfairly subsumes the essence of these communities in the miscues and theoretical notions of national development.

Allusions have disingenuously been made to the low per capita GNP of heterogeneous states that are simultaneously economically underdeveloped, while linguistically homogeneous states with moderate to high per capita GNP are deemed to be relatively economically well-developed (Bamgbose, 1994:37, citing Banks and Textor 1963). But using the same cross-polity data, Fishman (1968) has debunked any necessary correspondence between linguistic heterogeneity and low economic status and vice versa, as Bamgbose eloquently demonstrates in the following analysis. Of the 114 countries examined, 52 are linguistically homogeneous, while 62 are heterogeneous. Of the 52, 25 (about 50%) have low or very low per capita GNP, while 47 of the 62 (about 75%) have low or very low per capita GNP. African countries, with the exception of South Africa at the time, belong to the category of low or very low per capita GNP, a grouping that includes not only the linguistically homogeneous Arab countries of North Africa, but also linguistically homogeneous black countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia and Madagascar.

The above conclusions strongly suggest that other significant variables are at work, though one must concede that there might be some validity to the contributory factor of language diversity, mainly due to unresponsive and insensitive language policy formulation and implementation in spheres where it would clearly ameliorate such austere assessments. What is clear, though, is that language diversity cannot be solely blamed for the lot of poorer countries as suggested by some (see Pool 1972:214, Fishman 1968:63 on sectionalism and politically unassimilated minorities seen as impediments to national integration and development).

In any case, linguistic heterogeneity in modern states (Connor 1972:320; Leclerc 1992) will remain a hard fact for a long time yet, irrespective of the giant strides of globalization in a litany of spheres.

5. Literacy in the national development process

Literacy is pivotal in any national, widespread development process, which is duly cognizant of mass participation and communication opportunities down to the grassroots. Language is an essential tool in social organization and control, just as literacy and communication are vital for socio-economic development. The written language assumes an even more crucial role as the means of access to knowledge: education, law, information storage and retrieval, lexical and conceptual development and the systematic organization of the lexicon. Science and technology depend on written communication through the processes of denomination, particularization and intellectualization. A literate society enjoys superiority in these matters, therefore in Nigeria it is critical to revamp policies to ensure reasonable success of existing language policies. The potential benefits would be enormous for the speakers of languages other than the majority languages in which literacy is currently sought, beside the obviously neutral official English.

Unfortunately, even mass communication specialists have often derided the importance and role of linguistic diversity. For example, Schramm (1964:101-102) sees Africa as a "veritable quilt of languages," implying smaller audiences (*cf.* Bamgbose 1994:41). In contrast, he suggests that the use of Spanish in Latin America and Portuguese in Brazil may have facilitated the growth of the press, while in India regional and tribal languages increase the problems of national broadcasting and exchange of

information. Also, Weiner (1967:192) views the multiplicity of languages as a barrier to communication, and the development of Indian tribal languages as divisive, "since literacy leads to a deepening of divisions in terms of reading materials." That is obviously one archaic view, defective though it may appear in its generalization.

The subject of literacy must be defined broadly to reach beyond the narrow understanding in immediate socioeconomic terms. Of critical importance is the full realization of the human potential, to the extent that literacy can contribute to it. Literacy programmes in countries such as Nigeria face the dilemma of adopting, for this purpose, a foreign language in which there is hardly enough qualified personnel in the formal school system, as reiterated by Bangbose (1984:23). This practice, a subterfuge for national cohesion, is inimical to existing minority languages and the culture they mediate, particularly with respect to languages endangered due to the worsening numerical inferiority of their speakers.

On the other hand, literacy in a local or minority language may be restrictive, or even irreconcilable with the ideal of productive, active mass participation in national development. A partial solution could therefore involve broadening the gamut of non-official languages in avenues of direct impact on the lives of ordinary citizens, such as in licenses, health information, political bulletins, tax receipts and other papers such as forms to be completed for elections, work, etc. The media should also be involved in ensuring that information materials reach this category of citizens in their language of everyday communication, thereby circumventing third party purveyors of critical information.

Literacy, as viewed above, and as a fundamental human right (Declaration of Persepolis 1975; Article 26, of the Declaration of Human Rights) may be a hackneyed reference in academic discourse, but it remains a basic inaccessible right for a lot of real people with an otherwise inalienable entitlement to the language they speak in their natural environment. Viewed critically, such affirmation of language as a fundamental right confronts the basic tenet of functional literacy, which, by traditional definition, is selective and elitist. It also confronts the added burden of the intent of proponents, mainly speakers of majority languages, who fervently recommend the redeployment or severe reduction of literacy resources expended for the benefit of minority languages, which they

suggest, are all too content to remain oral to all intents and purposes. In Nigeria, this assertion is, of course, an itinerary to a political minefield.

However, insofar as literacy improves human condition, any measures limiting access to it are inevitably discriminatory, hence the obligation of every organized polity to aspire to full literacy in the educational, health, economic and political spheres. In this regard, given the constraints imposed by limited resources, a language used extensively by the immediate community can effectively replace the mother tongue as the language of literacy. It is of course idle to propose literacy in all and every language, but hardly recommending itself is the other extreme of advocating *one* national language against all odds in a diverse and multilingual society such as Nigeria. Not even the fictitious, hybridized 'wazobia' can forestall the inevitable controversy of any such proposition.

Perennial arguments of high costs, inadequate resources and the inferred threat of almost certain failure ignore the costs in local democratic and development capital to vast numbers of citizens who happen to fortuitously find themselves rooted in minority territories. In any case, experience shows that these costs will be mitigated by substantial input from local interests, if they are deliberately and sufficiently courted and mobilized through language committees comprising teachers, linguists and some financial or material subsidy (Bamgbose 1984:25).

Literacy has clear advantages in Nigeria. An IMF warning issued as recently as November 2002 signals that 80% of oil revenues are diverted into the hands of bureaucrats and politicians who purport to run the country, often only on the basis of their education and literacy. Conversely, only 20% of those enormous resources reach 80% of the population, exactly the segment we have in mind in this discussion. This mass of deprived citizenry happens to coincide with the illiterate, often far removed and ignorant of their democratic rights, government programmes, government excesses and mismanagement.

Existing successful literacy projects support the feasibility of including several languages in literacy programmes in heterogeneous states (Bamgbose 1984:25). An example given is the Rivers Readers project launched in 1977, and which has provided materials for more than 20 languages and dialects in which vital information is conveyed. It mostly relied on language committees working with specialists on orthography,

readers and primers. Next, a common accessible, affordable format was adopted as a template for the artists working on relatively inexpensive texts, sometimes handwritten, reproduced by offset lithography, or mimeographed.

Bamgbose further points out that the 1982 literacy campaign, though designed as functional literacy, was aimed at the “total eradication of illiteracy,” and to “encourage individuals to see literacy as a means of self-improvement [and] improved performance in their jobs.” These lofty ideals obviously imply the use of language. Unfortunately, policy and practice do not always converge.

Indisputably, the enormous aggregate size of illiterate minority populations in Nigeria, the inherently complex multilingualism and cultural diversity, the need to ensure mass participation in national development, all conspire to provoke freedom from the prejudice of anyone promoting the use of one national language, thus surreptitiously referring to the adoption of any one of the majority languages in juxtaposition with English.

6. Conclusion

Minority languages and the language of choice of the immediate community remain the vehicle that assures access to information circulated in English and the majority languages through mass communication outlets. In Nigeria, where the grassroots are often in the dark about national events, programmes and projects, access to vital information will enhance democracy and other avenues for mass participation in the democratic process. The democratization of language use does not contradict democratic tenets, and if implemented conscientiously, it should in the long run increase participation in the sociopolitical activities vital to accountability and national development.

Moreover, as emphasized by Bamgbose (1984:26), “no one should be forced to learn to read and write while at the same time learning a new language code.”

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Vocabulary Knowledge and Academic Success: The Literacy Woes of South African Secondary Students in the Free State

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1. Background

While the Language in Education Policy of July 14, 1997 makes provisions for South African children to be taught in the official language of their choice (Government of South Africa 1997), virtually all the primary, secondary and tertiary schools in the country use English as the medium of instruction. The only exceptions to this are the institutions that operate in Afrikaans, most of which offer parallel instruction in English, and some primary schools that offer a very limited degree of mother tongue (L1) instruction to native speakers of African languages. This means that the vast majority of South African students study and take examinations in a language that is not their L1, and sometimes not even their L2 or L3. The only students in the country who truly avail themselves of the opportunity to study in the official language of their choice are the Afrikaans speakers who opt for an education in their L1 (Government of South Africa 2002).

This language of education policy was an astute political move on the part of the Mandela government. The widespread belief then and now, one adhered to by the vast majority of South Africans, was that the best educational hope for the nation's children lay in the mastery of English, an international language. However, the first post-apartheid government could hardly impose English as the only official medium of instruction in South Africa after years of racial conflict. There had to be at least lip service paid to the plethora of official languages, 11 in all, none of which could be given more status than the others without creating further conflict in a country already wracked by violence. By creating a policy that ostensibly opened the door to instruction in all of the country's official languages, but in reality opened the door wide enough for only one, Mandela and his ministers arrived at a politically expedient solution to their problem. Today, every South African is guaranteed the right to education in the official language of her or her choice, but getting an education in a language other than English or Afrikaans is well nigh impossible.

While the political astuteness of this piece of legislation cannot be questioned, the educational value may be. A closer look at what is happening within the walls of many South African classrooms reveals that the use of English as the default language of instruction has done little to level the historically uneven playing field of the country. While most White children have English or Afrikaans at home, hence mother tongue knowledge of the language of instruction in the school they attend, most Black children have limited contact with English in their home environment and arrive at school with English language skills that range from highly imperfect to nonexistent. To complicate matters, there is no ESL or EFL instruction in South African English language medium schools, nor are there any serious provisions made for mother tongue maintenance in the case of African languages. Although South African students have at least one course a year in their mother tongue (or in an African language they happen to speak) and although many primary teachers do at least some of their teaching in their learners' L1, essentially because they have found that a new language and new concepts are too much for their young charges to handle at the same time, there is no systematic development of either English or L1 literacy skills in the majority of the nation's children.

The poverty in which many South Africans live also has a negative impact on both literacy and academic performance. Some school children have no access to radio or television at home, sometimes because there is no electricity in the house. Furthermore, there is no money in the budget of many South African families for any reading material in any language. Many schools are similarly impoverished and have no electricity, no library resources to speak of, and no teaching aids beyond chalk and chalkboards. Rather cruelly, some of the schools that have books cannot make them available to students because the school library has been sacrificed to provide more classroom space. This was the case of the school in which the present study was conducted.

Another obstacle in the way of literacy is the fact that many poor children come from families of which many members cannot or do not read and write. In 2001 only 14% of the Black population had secondary-level qualifications and six to eight million adults were functionally illiterate (Garson 2003). While parents in South Africa, like parents anywhere else in the world, want the best for their children, many, not having attended school for long themselves, do not realize how important reading is to

academic success and consequently do not accord it the attention and importance they should in the household. Deprived of reading role models, children are unlikely to become avid readers themselves even if books were made available to them.

History, politics and economics have, in a sense, conspired against the poor Black children of South Africa, leaving them with poor literacy in English and no real opportunity to develop the skills they need to succeed academically. Even more tragically, these children have been deprived of mother tongue literacy as well, and, as a result, lack a solid base on which to develop the metacognitive skills essential to academic success. This lack of literacy in any language has translated into academic disaster in the country's poorest areas; a high percentage of poor Black children are failing and leaving school without a diploma and without any hope for the future. Of those who do graduate, only a small number have matriculation results that would permit them to enter university.

Given the current socioeconomic situation of South Africa, which includes a massive AIDS crisis and an economic downturn, there are unlikely to be changes in the near future that would bring either mother tongue literacy or ESL classes to schools. Although literacy is a crucial issue in South Africa, it is farther down the urgency hierarchy than health and employment concerns and is therefore less likely to be addressed in the near future. This means that the search for solutions to the literacy problems of the poor Black population must take place within the bounds of the existing system and existing financing. To understand what can be done within the present constraints, it is necessary to have some idea of the level of literacy of the students in question and of the impact of literacy on their academic lives. Once this has been ascertained, it becomes possible to identify potential solutions by looking at results achieved by literacy projects undertaken in comparable situations. It was with a view to accomplishing the first of these two goals that the study reported on here was undertaken.

2. The study

2.1 Participants

The research project involved a total of 136 secondary students enrolled in a secondary school in a poor, rural area of the eastern Free State. The students were native speakers of either IsiZulu or Sesotho, and most spoke both of these languages in addition to the English and Afrikaans they had acquired. They ranged in age from 15 to 21 and were in grades 10 through 12. Although students above the age of 18 are no longer supposed to be in the secondary school system in South Africa, there were no adult education centres in the immediate area into which the 19 to 21 year-olds could transfer, so they had no choice but to remain in the same school if they wished to continue their studies. Compulsory education in South Africa extends to grade 9. This means that the participants in this study were not legally obligated to be in school. It is therefore safe to assume that the students assessed in the course of this study were highly motivated to be in school and had experienced some degree of academic success. Table 1 provides a profile of the participants by grade and gender.

Table 1: Participants by grade and gender (N = 136)

Grade	M	F
10	9	17
11	43	37
12	12	18
Total	64	72

2.2 Data collection

Writing samples were collected using a picture prompt. The original idea was to have the students write an opinion essay, but their writing ability in English proved to be too limited for all but a handful of them to produce such a piece of writing. Instead, the participants were given a picture showing a man sleeping on a stool in a café while the cook tries to offer him more coffee, and were asked to imagine a story about what had

happened to lead up to the scene depicted and what was likely to follow. The picture used was selected from among three or four possibilities by the school principal and several teachers. They felt that their students could relate to the scene and would be able and willing to write a story about it.

The instructions for the task were given in writing in English, IsiZulu and Sesotho, and explained orally in all three languages. The students had one hour to write and were told that there was no need to do both a draft and a clean version. In spite of this, many students did two copies of their story. All of the participants were encouraged to be as imaginative and as original as possible. This measure was taken in light of experience gained in administering a similar story-telling task to Southeast Asian learners, many of whom copied classmates' texts verbatim (Morris 2001). Participants who were unsure of words or spelling were allowed to ask the researcher or their teacher for help. This was done to keep them from getting hung up on a word and sitting there for an hour without writing. When new words of vocabulary were provided, the researcher took note of them and subsequently eliminated them from the texts. In the end, the students did not ask for much help and only five or six words were provided in all.

2.3 Analyses

The first analysis to which the texts were submitted was vocabulary profiling. This was done using the web-based Vocabprofiler (Cobb 2002), a modified version of Nation's vocabulary profiler. All of the texts were spell checked, had proper nouns removed and then were submitted one at a time to the profiling programme. Vocabprofiler calculates the percentage of words in the following categories: the 1000 most frequent words of English (K1), function words (F, the grammatical word subset of K1), the second 1000 most frequent words (K2), the Academic Word List (AWL), and off list words (OL).

The next step consisted in the calculation of morphological accuracy rates. In the course of previous studies, the researcher had looked at the use of plural *-s*, past *-ed*, and 3rd person singular *-s* in obligatory contexts. When applied to the South African texts, however, this approach proved inadequate. There was a dearth of simple form morphology in general and of 3rd person singular *-s* in particular. In contrast, the participants did much

better with the construction of multipart verb forms such as progressives and perfects. In light of these findings, the decision was made to do two separate calculations: accuracy rates for the use of *-s* and *-ed* in obligatory contexts for regular verbs, and accuracy rates in the production for multipart verb forms (i.e. providing all of the elements of progressives, perfects, passives). The 'modal + infinitive' construction was not considered in the multipart verb calculation. Since it occurred very frequently and was rarely wrongly constructed, it would have skewed the participants' accuracy rates upwards. An initial attempt was made to calculate success in using plural *-s*, but this was abandoned after it was discovered that there were very few plurals in any of the texts.

The final step in the analytical process consisted in correlating vocabulary profile results and morphological accuracy rates with the students' grades in a variety of different subjects. This was done in order to determine which results were the best predictors of academic performance in each subject area. The hope was to gain some understanding of the role played by English language knowledge in success by subject matter.

3. Findings and discussion

The participating students worked diligently and cheerfully for the hour they were given, but the texts they produced could only be described as appalling. Almost all of the texts produced were riddled with errors in vocabulary, morphology, syntax, spelling and punctuation. A high percentage had no discernible story line and consisted exclusively of an uninspired and uninspiring description of the picture that served as the prompt. A few stories were simply incomprehensible. Sample stories have been included in Appendix A.

Given that the participants were at the grade 10 to 12 level and had been studying in English language medium schools for most or all of their academic careers, the quality of their writing came as a bit of a shock. Many of the texts looked more like something a native-speaking child in grade 2 or 3 would produce than something that would be expected from a student about to sit a secondary matriculation examination at the end of the school year. Furthermore, the texts were weak across all of the

categories assessed. It was not simply a matter of poor spelling or bad grammar in an otherwise acceptable story. It was a matter of shockingly poor levels of basic literacy across the board.

The vocabulary profile results revealed that the participants were relying heavily on the 1000 most frequent words of the English language. Whereas a native speaker might have a K1 score of somewhere from 80 to 90% in very informal writing, the South African students had K1 percentages that were similar to those of low-level ESL students (Morris & Tremblay 2002a) and well below those reported by Laufer and Nation (1999) for comparably aged L2 students. The results are reported in Table 2.

Table 2: Vocabulary profiles by grade level

Grade	Words	%K1	%K2	%AWL	%OL
10	213	94.76	4.04	.32	.89
11	244	93.89	4.43	.56	1.24
12	263	93.64	3.91	.52	1.96

The South African students were also comparable to very low level ESL learners in their morphological accuracy rates, particularly when it came to using 3rd person singular *-s* and past *-ed* on simple verb forms. Here their performance was nearly identical to that of Francophone high-beginner ESL students in the Canadian province of Quebec (Morris & Tremblay 2002b). In comparison, native speakers of English at a comparable level of education would have accuracy rates of close to 100% in both the simple and multipart verb categories. In other words, the South African students were not simply nonnative-like in their use of morphology; they performed on the same level as very weak second language students who were doing ESL as a junior college graduation requirement and who were certainly not entertaining any idea of studying in an English-language medium institution (Morris & Tremblay 2002a). The results of the morphological accuracy analyses are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Morphological accuracy by grade level

Grade	Simple	Multipart	Total
10	.23	.55	.41
11	.28	.59	.39
12	.34	.66	.49

The next step in the study involved an analysis of the academic results for each grade level. This was done by calculating pass rates and average grades for courses taken by more than 10 students. The results are reported in Table 4.

Table 4: Pass rates and class averages by grade

Subject/Grade	Pass rate %			Average grade %		
	10	11	12	10	11	12
English	0	36	16	44	41	37
Zulu or Sesotho	42	28	44	45	43	49
Math	31	16	13	43	27	20
Economics	50	9	-	48	37	-
Accounting	92	9	-	73	32	-
Physics	-	8	9	-	37	37
Biology	-	15	15	-	41	33

An examination of the above results reveals an extremely bleak academic picture across all grade levels, with a disheartening decline in grades and pass rates in Grades 11 and 12. This tailing off effect could be attributable to differences between academic cohorts, but this possibility is unlikely given the superior results of the Grade 12 group on the

morphological accuracy assessment. The Grade 12 students had better English skills than their Grade 10 and 11 counterparts, and were quite likely equal or better in general academic terms because they had survived longer in the system. A more plausible explanation of the decline is the approach and arrival of nationwide matriculation exams written at the end of Grade 12. While individual schools and teachers can pass students through Grade 10 and Grade 11, results at the Grade 12-level are assessed from without. As sorry as they are, the Grade 12 marks are probably a more accurate reflection of the students' true academic ability than either the Grade 10 or Grade 11 grades. This hypothesis needs to be borne in mind when measures of English ability are correlated with academic performance.

As was the case for pass rate calculations, correlations between grades and language skills were established on a level-by-level basis. All of the correlations that reached statistical significance in at least one of the levels are reported for all of the levels. The results are reported in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

Table 5: Correlations with academic results - Grade 10 students

Trait	Subject	Pearson r	Sig.	N
Words	English	.163	.426	26
K1	Zulu or Sesotho	-.056	.786	26
K1	Physics	-	-	-
AWL+OL	Physics	-	-	-
AWL+OL	Biology	-	-	-
AWL+OL	Mathematics	.337	.202	16
Simple	English	.035	.864	26
Compound	English	.031	.885	26
K1	Simple	-.260	.119	26
K1	Compound	-.156	.455	26

In the case of the Grade 10 students, there were no significant correlations to report between either lexical or grammatical production on the writing task and results in the various courses the students were taking. This finding is surprising given the deplorably low level of English language ability shown by some of the participants and the much better skills of others. How could students writing at an early primary level of ability and showing levels of morphological accuracy akin to those of very low-level ESL students possibly cope with the literacy demands of any Grade 10 subjects that required reading and writing at native speaker levels? How could students with manifestly superior literacy skills fail to outperform much weaker classmates in English, if not in other subjects?

Table 6: Correlations with academic results - Grade 11 students

Trait	Subject	Pearson r	Sig.	N
Words	English	.217	.053	80
K1	Zulu or Sesotho	.158	.176	75
K1	Physics	.007	.986	33
AWL+OL	Physics	.168	.306	39
AWL+OL	Biology	.258	.104	41
AWL+OL	Mathematics	.261*	.041	62
Simple	English	.824**	.000	80
Compound	English	.768**	.000	80
K1	Simple	-.280*	.012	80
K1	Compound	.169	.139	78

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 7: Correlations with academic results - Grade 12 students

Trait	Subject	Pearson r	Sig.	N
Words	English	.836**	.000	25
K1	Zulu or Sesotho	-.418*	.037	25
K1	Physics	-.742**	.009	11
AWL+OL	Physics	.663*	.026	11
AWL+OL	Biology	.449*	.049	20
AWL+OL	Mathematics	.461	.084	30
Simple	English	.672**	.000	24
Compound	English	.457*	.025	24
K1	Simple	-.021	.913	29
K1	Compound	-.010	.957	29

* p < .05

**p < .01

One explanation may be that the marks in many subjects were simply so low and similar that almost all discriminatory power was lost. For example, the standard deviation in the English marks of the Grade 10 students was a very low 6.51, with 17 of 26 marks falling between 30% and 40%. In contrast, the standard deviation of their morphological accuracy scores, also expressed as a percentage, was 22.25, with scores ranging from 0 to 88. The standard deviations for grade in other courses were marginally higher, but always much lower than those of the morphology accuracy measurements. In contrast, the marks of the Grade 11 and 12 students showed much higher standard deviations and more discriminatory power in all subject matters.

The Grade 11 correlations were considerably less disconcerting than those found at the Grade 10 level. The morphological accuracy of the Grade 11 students was a strong predictor their marks in English, and, to a lesser extent, their use of AWL and Off-List words predicted their mathematics results. We can thus see the beginnings of an alignment of language skills and academic results. This alignment becomes much more discernible at the Grade 12 level, the point at which students are facing national matriculation exams. For this group the total number of words produced and success in using verbal morphology predicted academic results in English, and vocabulary knowledge predicted results in mother tongue, physics and biology courses.

Although there is no clear patterning across the grade levels, there is a tendency for morphological ability to correlate significantly with grades in English and for lexical knowledge to correlate with grades in other subject matters. This situation was initially puzzling, but, upon reflection, amenable to explanation. The students' English courses made the greatest demands on their productive language skills. Discussions with teachers and the principal of the school revealed that the students did little writing in any subject, but more in English than in any other. Grammatical ability has a significant impact on written production. The greater the students' mastery of verbal morphology, the longer and more sophisticated the texts they produce. Thus, students with good morphological accuracy would be more likely to perform well in courses that required students to produce texts. In subjects such as mathematics, physics and biology, receptive language skills are more important than productive ones, and knowledge of content words plays a determining role in receptive ability. The students have to be able to recognize key vocabulary items in order to solve word problems, follow instructions for conducting experiments, and so forth.

As for the growth in the number and strength of language skill–grade correlations as the students move through the system, it is possible the increasing pressure on teachers to mark according to the national norms applied on matriculation exams serves to bring marks into line with academic ability. While it is possible to use good marks as a means of encouraging students and moving them along through the system at the lower secondary level, such a strategy could create serious problems as students approach the exit level. If the course marks do not correspond in any way with exam marks, teachers might be called upon to explain the

reasons. As the grades start to reflect academic reality, the correlation between language skills and results grows stronger.

4. Conclusions

The results of this study do not paint a bright picture of the academic present and future of the Grade 10, 11 and 12 students who so kindly agreed to participate, but they perhaps provide a glimmer of hope for the future. While the current socioeconomic conditions in South Africa preclude the possibility of the implementation of sweeping changes that would bring a nationwide mother tongue literacy programme to the nation's primary schools, the findings of this study suggest that the introduction of regular English vocabulary-building activities starting at the school-entry level might prove a good, cost-effective remedial measure. Those South African students who have little exposure to English in their home environments need to learn in school the words they need to make sense of their reading and ultimately of the world around them.

Another recommendation that can be made on the basis of the findings of this study is that the students of South Africa need access to books they are able to read and understand. Given that the majority of these students are non-native speakers of English, this means graded readers and simplified texts until such time as they have developed the skills to handle books intended for native speakers. If students only see books that are impossible for them to read, it is highly unlikely that they will ever become literate. The students who participated in this study were required to read and analyze *Animal Farm* at the Grade 12 level. It is quite clear from the level of English proficiency shown in the students' texts that few, if any, were capable of reading Orwell with any uptake or degree of pleasure. When the final year of a student's secondary studies brings nothing but a failure to cope with required texts, the situation is a sad one indeed. One can only marvel at the resiliency of the students who persevere and continue to attend school in the face of constant failure.

It is hard to imagine an imminent happy ending to the story of the poor, Black students of South Africa. Without proper literacy skills in any of the many languages they speak, they are unlikely to succeed in graduating from secondary school and finding a job which will result in their social and economic advancement. It can only be hoped that the forces that brought

an end to the injustice of apartheid can be harnessed once again; this time to put a stop to another form of injustice, one which penalizes the majority of South Africa students for being born into poor, non-English-speaking households.

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Appendix A: Sample stories from the Grade 12 participants

Text 1

In this picture when I look in the picture I see there two people one is standing one is sleeping. the story is between these guy or man and woman. this man come to the restaurant because is so Angry when this woman come back to this man she get man are sleeping, this woman come with coffee. in the cup. she get a problem about this man.

She ask in any question what wrong about this man what happen about this guy. After asking its self. he look this things he can this man drink alcohol or this man are using drugs. because this man when starting to enter in the restaurant he want a little cup of coffee. what real happen or what takes place in this man.

Because this man is wearing big jacket and wearing a big hut on the head. now is sleeping. Don't says any things or this man are ill. because this man are wearing a big shoes on the foot. After drinking that cup of coffee he is starting be alone again. Don't forget this man was tired. this woman its so poisoned. when get this man are sleeping on the table. here come in the front of that man she ask this man you want more little coffee cup again? this man not give answer. this woman he get be poisoned for that man he feel sorry about that guy if your are human being you must respect other people he give that guy time to come back again.

Text 2

In the picture I see many things. In the picture I see two people man and woman. This man is look like tired because he is sleeping. This woman bring the coffee for him . He look like the person who drink alcohol. This woman take time to bring the coffee for him until he was sleeping.

He look like previous day was in tavern because he was so tired. What might happen after I think he broad down this table because he is sleeping in the table. This mother was just behind this father.

She look like ask that man what happen about you but this man was not understanding because he was sleeping. And I see that cup is look like an empty cup there is no coffee in the cup. So that's why this man was look like tired.

The Mother is look like to be surprised that Man. But there is no way that Mother can do because he was very tired. Maybe when he was wake up he tired to told this mother what happen about him and this mother must understand.

This Mother is look like a kitchen girl. I see her clothes. This man is look like a farm worker because I see the style of his clothes and the way he was tired. He wearing the black clothes only I don't know why.

Text 3

The story is about a bar near my school. In this bar the was a woman. She was the owner of this bar. She had three children. And they were all girls. The woman's bar it is inside the house. All here young girls were under 15 years. They use to help him to sell bears and cleaning the bar every time.

She was a single parent. That means she is a bread winner. The names of her children were The girls loved their mother. But the first child did not get along with his mother. She have to take care of here two sisters. Here mother didn't care about here. All she does was insulting there girl she blamed here on everything here young sister does. Even when she had a problem. She has no one to talk to.

One day when this girl came home, here mother was not at home. There was a man. He use to drink in this bar. This man has an eye on this girl. He was too old to this girl And she didn't like. He use to touch this girl in a way, that makes him to fill unacceptable. She felt that this thing was going to far. She tried to tell here mother but she didn't listen to here. All she said it was you are disobedient. you don't have to be this way. All you have to do is to be nice to this man. He is only want to talk to you. And that this

man is his friend. And is bringing him customers and without him the will be no food.

This girl didn't know what to do. Because she didn't want to disrespect his mother. That day when her mother was not at home. It was a chance of this man to make a move on this. When the girl came in this man closed the door and locked it. It was the time He raped her.

This girl didn't have someone to talk to. She started using drugs. To refrain from the pain she used too much cocaine. And drank much beer and she died inside the bar. Her mother found her dead on the table bar. She didn't know what to say. The cops told her this girl was being raped. She started blaming herself.

Text 4

At the beginning this man was walking home from work and on his way he began feeling thirsty. He then remembered that there was a restaurant on the other side of the street. He crossed the street to walk on the left hand side so that he can be closer to the restaurant. And then he entered at the restaurant only to find that he was the only person inside the restaurant, so he thought that as it was cold he would better start to drink something that will refresh him.

He then ordered a bottle of wine to quench his thirst so the waitress brought it to him with a glass. That was when he started drinking but due to the fact that he was drinking alone. He began thinking about all the problems he had in life he started to shiver as it was cold and the wine was also cold. He thought that how would it be if he ordered a cup of coffee to warm him up. He decided to do so for a try.

He again called the waitress to bring him a hot cup of coffee, so the waitress did as he said. To the fact that it was cold as soon as the man began to be warm he started to feel tired. And he started nodding on and on until he ended nodding off, but as he ordered a cup of coffee he said to the waitress he will not be enough until he gets about three or four cups.

Therefore the waitress seeing that he was already asleep she then brought a kettle and said to him "How about a little more coffee." But she

received no answer as the man was snoring like a mountain bear not even opening his eyes. The waitress decided to leave him alone and do her work. AS it was late already the waitress cleaned the restaurant and realising that the man was not going to wake up she covered him with her jacket in his feet. She therefore locked the bat and went to this man's place to report to his wife that she left him asleep in the restaurant. So he slept there for the whole night and he only woke up when the waitress was there to open the restaurant for the business to run properly. But to my imagination and my understanding I can say that this is the end of my discussion.

Meeting the Literacy Needs of a Pre-literate Society

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1. Introduction

At the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand, world governments set as a target the provision of basic education for all by the year 2000. By 1995, it was clear that this target would not be met and so, at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen that year, the deadline was shifted to 2015.¹ According to an Oxfam International press release in September 2002, 125 million children have never been inside a school and nearly one billion adults in the world today are illiterate.² Significant progress has been made in the fight against illiteracy in the past 50-60 years. Unfortunately, literacy efforts have not been able to keep pace with the world's rapid population growth. Approximately 50 percent of the illiterate adults in the world today are speakers of minority languages, many of which are unwritten languages. Although many of those languages have been the objects of linguistic research, that work, in many instances, has not led to practical results, such as the preparation of the language and the community for literacy. It has been estimated that the rate of illiteracy among those speaking an unwritten or only-recently written language is over 60 per cent (*Literacy in the '90s*, SIL 1990:6). Literacy is a key to long-term socio-economic development. A well-known Chinese proverb says "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for life." As pointed out by SIL (1990:18-19), "Literacy benefits both individuals and their communities...(It) brings a greater sense of personal dignity, additional skills in problem solving, and the respect of others who tend to view the illiterate as an ignorant and marginal person fit only for common labor."

In this paper we will examine the general problem of illiteracy in minority languages which lack a written tradition, and propose the stages which are necessary in introducing literacy to those pre-literate societies. The process of minority-language literacy involves a number of stages: the research stage, the motivational stage, the implementation stage, and the independent stage.³ In many of the minority languages in our world today, the research stage must include the development of a system for writing the language. The community, which has hitherto used its language only for

oral purposes, may have developed certain negative attitudes towards that language, hence the need for the motivational phase. Once the foundation of proper research and motivational activities has been laid, a literacy program needs to be implemented; and, finally, in the independent stage, there needs to be a phasing out of the outside agent(s) of change, and, eventually, the handing over of the project to trained local personnel.

2. Research stage

Basic linguistic research is fundamental to any literacy project, but particularly in the case of an unwritten language. An in-depth analysis of the phonological and grammatical structure of the language is essential before any attempt is made to produce reading materials. One area that is of particular importance is that of allophones, and the decision concerning which of the allophones should be chosen as the basic phoneme in the language. In some cases, the choice may be simply an arbitrary one that the linguist is free to make; in other cases, the speakers of the language may have a psychological preference for one over the other. If that is the case, then their 'intuition' needs to be taken into account in choosing the phoneme.

Another crucial decision arises if there are several dialects of the language being studied. If that is the case, then it is essential that the researcher solicit input from the speakers of the language themselves before any decision is made as to which of the dialects will be the written form of the language. Another potential problem which the researcher may face is the situation where certain words vary in their pronunciation, depending upon the age/generation of the speaker. A decision will have to be made as to which pronunciation of the word will be considered the 'standard' form.

A decision that is crucial in a tonal language that does not have a written tradition is which tones will need to be marked in the written form, and what type of notation will be used (Wiesemann 1995). In some cases the use of the traditional accents (` , ´ , etc.) may not be the best solution. For instance, in a number of languages in Ivory Coast, the tone is indicated by a punctuation marks placed before the syllable (Bolli 1987). These are only

a few of the 'technical' decisions which need to be made before any literacy materials can be produced in the language.

3. *Motivational stage*

The matter of motivation is an important aspect in any literacy program, but people who speak a minority language, especially an unwritten one, often face a particular barrier. That barrier is the fact that, unlike other languages, which in many cases means the 'major' language(s) of the area, their language has never been able to be used for written communication. This may have resulted in their believing that their language *cannot* be written, and they may need to be shown that not only can it be written, but that they themselves can actually put their thoughts and words in written form. In other words, they need to be helped to realize that not only can their language be written by outsiders, such as the linguist, who in most cases, is not a native speaker of the language in question, but that the 'insiders' can also learn to write it, and use it as a tool for communicating with other members of their people group. They need to be helped to see all the doors of opportunity that being able to read and write will open up to them. For instance, no longer will they need to have someone else write their letters for them, and thus be forced to divulge all their 'secrets' to someone other than the recipient of the letter. "For those living where there is frequent contact with the national socioeconomic system, literacy is a watershed skill. (A member of the Blaan people-group) from the Philippines made this point cogently when he said, 'Years ago, we had to put our thumbprint on the ballot to show that we had voted. Even then, we couldn't read so we didn't know for whom we had voted. Now, we can read and sign our ballots like any educated Filipino. Tomorrow, a Blaan name will be on the ballot. Then we will know that we have arrived'" (SIL 1990:16-17).

Seeing the relevancy of the literacy materials to their everyday life and activities will be an intrinsic motivation to the people to want to learn to read, and to want to see a literacy program implemented. This is why it is crucial that the literacy materials that are produced reflect the local culture and the world view of the people. They need to have booklets which deal with the endemic diseases of the area, and others which provide information that will help to improve their farming techniques, as well as

ones which record their proverbs and their folk tales. When they see the improved health of their children because of what they have learned through reading one of the books about the importance of using uncontaminated drinking water, or how to prevent the child from becoming dehydrated, they will be motivated to read more material. The same is true with the farmers. If literacy is linked to development plans, and they can see for themselves that what they read about rotating crops and methods for reducing soil erosion does in fact result in bigger and better crops, then they will be motivated to continue reading. It is crucial that new readers, and especially adult ones, be able to recognize their surroundings in the pages of the books that they are using to learn to read. "Reading materials are most effective when focused on common local problems and when pictures and illustrations evoke images familiar to the learner"(SIL 1990:12). In addition to health and agricultural booklets, there is a wide variety of other materials which can provide culturally-relevant reading material in literacy programs in these pre-literate societies: folk tale books to remind them of their culture; math books to teach them the basics of arithmetic to help them keep written (rather than just mental) financial records, and protect them from being cheated in business; books on politics to help them understand what is going on in the world at large; geography books to expand their thinking beyond the confines of their own country, or in some cases, even their own village; books about history to help them see how their people group fits into the history of their country, and their continent, as well as the world.

Another type of pedagogical material that needs to be developed is that which is designed to facilitate the transition from the local language to the national language. As the UNESCO publication states, "Transition to the national language is facilitated when rooted in literacy in the local language – a pedagogically sound process" (Robinson 1990).

A crucial aspect of the motivational stage is the involvement of the mother tongue speakers of the language in decisions at each step. In the initial stages, speakers should be involved with regard to orthography and the choice of dialect, and then later, they need to have a say in what literacy materials are particularly relevant to the community. Speakers should also have input into who should be taught to read first, who are potential teachers, where and when classes should be held, etc. The more involved

they are in the decision-making process, the more likely they are to embrace a literacy program.

4. Implementation stage

Once the necessary research has been done and basic reading materials have been produced, and the motivational phase has resulted in people wanting to learn to read, attention should turn to putting in place a widespread literacy program. This involves not only training local people to teach the literacy classes, but also producing additional reading materials, so that the new literates will have something more than just the basic primers and a few health and agricultural booklets to read. In some areas of the world, part of the literacy program has been the production of a local newspaper. For instance, among the Bimobo people of Ghana, where an attempt has been made to link a literacy program with agricultural practices, a local newspaper produced by the new literates themselves reports the latest developments in agriculture, health and nutrition. That literacy program “is making a positive impact among the estimated 60,000 Bimoba people, whose main economic activity is subsistence farming of maize, millet, beans and groundnuts” (Janke 1991a). “Literacy classes combined with some related agricultural teaching...(has) led to the use of new and improved agricultural practices, plus increases in crop yields” (Janke 1991a).

Among the Joola Kaasa, a people-group of Senegal which has only recently had a literacy program in its own language, a writer’s club was started in 1999, to encourage the people themselves to produce written materials, such as children’s stories, traditional stories and poems (Seever 2002). Producing native-authored materials in a language not only provides reading material for the new literates, but also helps to reinforce group identity and highlight the cultural traditions and values of the group.

According to UNESCO sources, two-thirds of the adult illiterates in the world are women.⁴ The main reason for this is undoubtedly the fact that in many of the developing countries, parents have often thought (and many still think) that it is a waste of time and money to send girls to school. In Africa it is said, “Teach a man to read and you have taught one person. Teach a woman to read and you have taught a family” (Crough 1997). In

most cases, the mother is not only the primary caregiver of the children, but also the one who provides the majority of their needs. Concerning a literacy project among the Hanga people of Ghana, it is said that “in communities where women have learned to read, mothers are better able to care for their children, since they can now read about health and nutrition in the booklets... (and those women) who aren't literate notice the improved condition of these children, and this becomes a motivation for them to learn to read too” (Dykink 1991). This is also another example of the close relationship between motivation and the relevancy of the literacy materials to everyday life and activities.

It is important that local people be trained to teach literacy classes. For one thing, this means that several classes can be going on at the same time, but it also will ensure that the classes continue long after the literacy specialist has left the area. These local teachers may not be as expert in their teaching as the literacy specialist, but they can certainly be trained to impart their knowledge of the written form of their language to other speakers of that language. Just as in our culture, certain people are what we describe as ‘born teachers,’ so it is in these minority languages. Often a minimum amount of training is sufficient to produce an excellent teacher. In the implementation stage, as an attempt is made to promote literacy classes on a wider scale, it is important to make use of existing structures within the society. Among the Adivasi Oriya of India, gurus have been the traditional wise men and scholars. In their literacy program, they have organized ‘guru groups,’ each with no more than ten students, where the participants are taught to read. A different method has been implemented among the Murel, a semi-nomadic group of Sudan. They use the each-one-teach-one method, where one person learns to read, and then he/she teaches a friend, and that friend in turn teaches someone else. In Papua New Guinea, yet another method has met with great success. Story-telling in that culture is a well-polished art and good storytellers are highly respected. Literacy specialists have made use of this fact by inviting storytellers into the classroom. The stories told are recorded on paper or on a blackboard and then used to begin building new reading drills. Students are reportedly captivated and respond enthusiastically to classroom activities (SIL 1990:13). The important thing in implementing a literacy program is to find a method that is culturally-relevant, and which motivates the people to want to learn to read.

5. Independent stage

The ultimate goal of the agent(s) of change – linguistic researcher, literacy specialist, adult educator – is to be able to leave the literacy program in the hands of trained local personnel with access to the production facilities needed to maintain the flow of post-literacy materials (Robinson 1990). The role of the agent(s) of change is crucial in the first three stages. However, in this final stage, their role becomes more that of a consultant, someone who is available to provide advice when problems arise, whether of a technical nature, concerning the production of materials; of an organizational nature, with regard to the overseeing of the program and the training of additional teachers; or even of a psychological nature, in simply providing moral support and encouragement.

Another aspect that needs to be taken into consideration is the on-going funding of the literacy programs. Literacy programs inevitably consume financial resources, and if the program on the local level is to reach the independent stage, the funding should not continue to come exclusively from outside agencies. Local programs need to be initiated to help fund literacy activities (SIL 1990:14). If the local community assumes at least some of the responsibility for financing the project, the people group will be more likely to assume a sense of ownership of the project, rather than seeing it as ‘belonging’ to the agent(s) of change. In addition, when the local community demonstrates a genuine commitment to the project from a financial perspective, national and international agencies are more inclined to take requests for financial assistance for local programs seriously.

One more important aspect of the independent phase is to help the local group to see their program as being part of a bigger picture, assuming that there are literacy programs being undertaken in other language groups within the country. As the UNESCO publication points out, “It is important that a local programme is linked to other minority-language initiatives elsewhere in the country for mutual support, cross-fertilization and the pooling of training resources” (Robinson 1990).

6. Conclusion

If the rise in the rate of illiteracy in the world is to be halted, minority-language literacy must become a priority in developing countries. Successful literacy programs, many of them funded by CIDA and other government agencies, have reported thousands of people becoming literate in countries such as Ghana (Janke 1991a, 1991b, Dykink 1991), the Philippines (SIL 1990:17), India (Parvati 1991, *Word Alive* 1991:10, Faulkner 1997), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Crough 1997), to name just a few. But, as was mentioned in the introduction, there are still nearly one billion illiterate adults in the world today. These people need to be taught to read and write first of all in their own local language, their L1, and then helped to make the transition to literacy in the national language, which will enable them to integrate more fully into the life of their country. To make this happen requires first of all that there be trained linguists who are willing to invest the necessary time and energy into taking an unwritten language, and the people who speak it, through the various stages outlined in this paper, ultimately bringing them to the point where there is an on-going literacy program in place and people are not only learning to read themselves, but are in turn teaching others. Only then will we see a decline in the number of illiterate adults in the world in which we live.

Notes

1. www.caa.org.au/oxfam/advocacy/education/news/
2. www.oxfam.org/eng/pr020923_broken_promises.htm
3. In suggesting these four stages in a minority-language literacy program, the author drew upon her own experiences in working in a literacy program among the Tikar people of west-central Cameroon, as well the ideas presented by Clinton Robinson in his 1990 UNESCO publication.
4. www.unesco.org/education/imld_2002/gift_zimbabwe.shtml

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**Scripta et Vox:
Some Observations on Language, Linguistics and Literacy
in Several Ancient Societies**

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“...quod fere plerisque accidit ut praesidio litterarum diligentiam in perdiscendo
ac memoriam remittant”

(“since it generally occurs to most men, that, in their dependence on writing, they
relax their diligence in learning thoroughly, and their employment of the
memory”) Julius Caesar *De bello Gallico* 6.14.4

1. Introduction

This conference concerns ‘literacy,’ but what do we mean by ‘literacy’? What does it mean to be ‘literate’? Does it refer exclusively to societies who have writing systems? Or is the meaning more comprehensive, having related, but more extensive associations?

In matters of meaning, as my first line of attack, I regularly take refuge in etymology. Literacy, of course, comes from the Latin word *littera* meaning ‘letter (of the alphabet)’ or, in the plural (*litteras*), ‘epistle.’ That knowledge, however, does not really clarify things, as letters of the alphabet need not be written down; most of us learned the alphabet not in written form, but orally, often via song. So being ‘literate’ involves more than simply knowing the alphabet, or even being able to write it down.

If we turn to the definition provided by *Webster’s New World Dictionary* (1980:825), we are given several meanings of the word ‘literate.’ The narrow definition of ‘literate’ is to be “able to read and write.” A second, more inclusive definition says that to be literate is to be “well educated; having or showing extensive knowledge, learning or culture.” This still is problematic: there are perhaps thousands of people who, though technically ‘literate’ by the first more narrow standard, would by no means qualify as ‘showing extensive knowledge’ or being ‘cultured.’ By the same token, it seems strange to call the man whose poems set the standard in Greek culture and education for hundreds of years – that would be Homer – or the man whose grammar has been described as the greatest intellectual achievement of all time – that would be Pāṇini – ‘illiterate,’

though both, technically, were. As far as we know, neither could read nor write their own language.

Obviously, there are many semantic ‘strings’ attached to the idea of literacy. Literacy in its broad meaning involves far more than an ability to recite or read an alphabet. I neither can nor wish to pursue many of the sociological, philosophical and political issues that swirl around literacy. Today I wish to limit myself to a brief discussion of the nature and scope of literacy in the two earliest recorded Indo-European societies: the Hittites, who dwelt in Anatolia – what is now Turkey – from c.1700-1200 BCE, and the group of people who spoke the Vedic dialect of the language we know as Sanskrit (1200-800 BCE), codified in c. 400 BCE by the great Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini.

Fortunately, for my present purposes, these two most archaic societies are at opposite poles on this issue. The Hittites put everything in writing: history, laws and treaties, trade dealings, political correspondence, religious rituals, medical texts, poetry, myth and literature. On the other hand, writing in the Vedic culture was considered outré, a mark of the intellectually deficient: one recited and committed to memory the vast linguistic lore that this society compiled, works of poetry, ritual, grammar, laws, medical and scientific knowledge, and passed it on orally. To this day, there are people who can chant verbatim what we believe to be the same formulae that ancient grammarians chanted three thousand years ago, as recorded in Pāṇini’s grammar, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Most ‘literate’ Vedic speakers knew the Vedas by heart, quite a feat for a group who would be considered, according to the ‘literal’ definition ‘illiterate.’

1.1. Some general remarks about ancient literacy

Before I turn to the two specific topics of the present paper, a few general remarks about literacy in the Ancient Near East are in order.

1. It is generally believed that even in the most ‘literate’ societies, only a small proportion of the population would have been able to read or write. In Greece and Rome, the figure is thought to have been about 10%, with the figure invariably higher for men than for women (Harris 1989).

2. Orality was greatly valued and fostered, with public recitals and performances of works of poetry common. Obviously, a good memory was encouraged and fostered as the sine qua non of this type of ‘literacy’: respect for memory was deeply entrenched in both Greek and Sanskrit cultures. Much has been written about the strength of ancient memories: “non-literate cultures are characterized by people with remarkably capacious and tenacious memories for continuous texts.” Although very little is known about the cognitive effects of literacy, there is considerable anecdotal evidence that “literacy tends to weaken memory”: many of the ancients believed that “writing brings not improved memory but forgetfulness” (Plato: *Phaedrus* 274c-275b). It is well known that music aids memory: perhaps the metric and tonal features of Sanskrit and Greek could be explained as *aides mémoires*.

3. Even in societies known to be literate in the sense that they possessed a writing system, often ‘written’ literacy was restricted to a specific class of people employed to read and write— scribes. This type was referred to as ‘scribal literacy’ – or was a feature of certain professions or crafts (‘craft literacy’).

4. Literacy was very much an urban phenomenon, with the vast majority of citizens outside the cities unable to write. Greeks and Romans often associated ignorance (illiteracy) with rusticity. (In Latin, the word *litteratus* had the same type of ambiguity that adheres to the English word: it meant both the restricted ‘knowing letters’ and the broader ‘cultured’). In cities, public announcements appeared on steles (ancient bill-boards) or temple walls – in public fora, where the urban citizenry could come to read important announcements. However, this was impractical if a wider, out-of-city, or out-of-country distribution was required. You can’t lug around a pillar.

5. Written literacy depended on two things: a) a reason to write things down, to form a permanent record, and b) a method of doing so. In matters of writing, necessity is the mother of invention: writing systems are believed to have begun as records of trade (i.e., numeracy preceded literacy), and advanced in scope and sophistication from there. Such things as trade, commerce and international diplomacy required permanent and portable records. Predictably, societies with histories of turning outward in these fields often had writing systems. I mention the Akkadians, the

Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians and the Hittites in this context. In addition to having a strong motive for developing writing systems, each of these societies had materials readily available to write on: the Egyptians had papyrus and were skilled in advanced painting techniques, the Akkadians, Sumerians and Hittites had ready access to clay, wood, and wax for tablets. The Hittites as well were skilled in metal-working techniques and dwelled in a region where workable metals were plentiful. It is certainly possible that one of the reasons why Vedic Indians did not write things down is because they lacked the enduring materials to do so; equally, if they did write things down, the palm leaves often used for this purpose have not survived.

6. A short, efficient alphabet is helpful for developing a writing system, and seems to have helped spread literacy among the Greeks. But a simple alphabet is not a pre-requisite: nearly all Japanese people are able to read and write, despite a complex writing system. The Akkadian syllabary, which contained nearly seven hundred symbols, was apparently no insurmountable challenge for the Akkadian scribes.

7. The last point: whether literacy refers to written or oral literacy, its proliferation depends then as now on an extensive, inclusive and subsidized system of education: schools to both reinforce and spread basic literacy.

2. The Hittites - Literacy as written record

It was only in the last century that scholars, doing archeological excavations in central Turkey, uncovered the vast palace archives buried beneath the ancient capital of Boğazköy. They found a treasure trove of thousands of tablets, written in Akkadian cuneiform, which after decipherment, turned out to contain not only Akkadian, but also several other unknown languages, including what we now call 'Hittite.' The Hittites were not totally unknown before this discovery. Many are familiar with the Biblical story of King David, who, seeing the beautiful Bathsheba bathing on her porch, decided that he had to have her. Regrettably, she was already married to another gentleman named Uriah the Hittite. Like many of the Hittites, Uriah was a military man, who for one reason or another, was deployed in Israel. In a singularly Machiavellian move, David arranged

for Uriah to be put in the front lines of the next scheduled battle, with predictable results. Consult the Bible for the rest of the story.

The script used on these tablets, Akkadian, is thought to have been borrowed from a previous people, the Sumerians of Ancient Mesopotamia. The Sumerian cuneiform ('wedge-shaped') script is thought to have originated from an earlier prototype which was apparently a mixture of script and pictogram. To this day, we do not know the ethnicity of the Sumerians, nor the language family to which they belonged ('a non-Semitic people of the Asianic group' is about as close as any will come to conjecturing on this point). We do know that their language and script were different in vocabulary, phonetic system, and morphological structure from the language of the influential group that made use of their script: the Akkadians, who were Semitic speakers. The Hittite language, being Indo-European, was of course vastly different in all the aforementioned ways from Akkadian, which leads to numerous difficulties and ambiguities.

What were these tablets like? They were rectangular in shape, able to be held in the hand (the original palm pilot). Generally the whole of their surface front and back ('obverse' and 'reverse') was closely covered with the cuneiform script. Each side of the tablet was divided into as many as four vertical columns, and the text was also divided into sections by ruled horizontal lines or 'paragraph dividers.' Often, the bottom column, separated by two lines, would be a 'post-script' from one scribe to another, either private notes like 'write to me in Hittite next time' or 'Šuppiluliuma's wife has run off with Karunta,' or some such.

Three types of material were used for the tablets: clay, wood and metal. Until recently, we had no surviving examples of the last two types, although the use of wood and metal for writing was clear from references in the clay tablets to wooden tablets and to treaties inscribed on silver and iron. As recently as 1986, a treaty was discovered inscribed in bronze, containing 353 lines and weighing in at 5 kilograms.

The writing was done by a select group of skilled persons, all men, as far as we know, known as 'scribes.' In Hittite culture, these scribes were not mere recording devices – human computers – but were highly skilled, learned and respected, often not only recording, but even acting as policy consultant to the kings and royal personages who dictated treaties, policies,

laws, etc. The scribes went away to school to learn their craft, and were trained in Mesopotamian schools of writing, called *Edubba* 'The House of Tablets.' They had to know several languages: their own, and Akkadian, the official language of commerce, diplomacy and correspondence throughout the Ancient Near East.

Physical location undoubtedly played a large role in Hittite writing culture. A look at a map of the Anatolian region will show the importance of such geographical considerations to the proliferation of written literacy among this centrally located group. It is known that "complex commercial relations, especially when carried on over long distances, encourage the use of writing and give a practical value to literacy which it might otherwise lack" (Harris 1989:18). The Hittites were located on what was perhaps the busiest of trading routes in the ancient world, routes leading to and from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and beyond. Being right smack dab in the middle of the world provided endless political possibilities as well. As I mentioned, the Hittites were military folk, but they were also a very diplomatic folk. In their writings we find records of political correspondence and treaties with such historical figures as the Pharaoh Ramses II of Exodus fame, or the widow of King Tut: caught in the maelstrom of political machinations and intrigues that followed her young husband's untimely death, she despatched a plea for the Hittite king to send one of his sons to be her next husband.

Who benefited from the Hittites' literacy? There is no doubt that we, as linguists, classicists, historians, anthropologists, have benefited. Because they wrote everything down, we are made aware that, despite the passage of millennia, some things never change. We know that the Hittites endured political intrigues, tiresome and scheming relatives, common medical and health complaints such as hemorrhoids, gas, impotence, venereal disease, childbirth pain. We pick up tidbits of ancient gossip and societal lore: the wife of the Egyptian king envied the prodigious child-bearing ability of a certain Hittite king's wife and wrote to find out what her 'secret' was.

In the area of religious lore, we are able to compare ritual formulae with those of other ancient societies: parallels with Greece are often astounding (Watkins 1995, West 1997). In Hittite literature, we can see the older, often original versions of more familiar mythical stories such as the (biblical) Flood, or the 'real story' of ancient Troy.

Linguists have especially benefited, although the ‘benefits’ were often mixed with a large measure of chagrin: almost all of the treasured assumptions of *Historical Linguistics* had to be overhauled in the face of the ‘hard’ evidence of the language of the tablets, which showed a system which was in many ways very different from the other IE languages. We benefited from the Hittite’s scribal literacy in the decipherment of the vast palace archives at Boğasköy: one of the tablets in the library was a trilingual ‘training manual’ dictionary used as a text book in the Edubba. Even the semi-permanent nature of the clay tablets aids linguistic study: because the tablets regularly broke and had to be recopied, we can trace the changes in the various stages of the Hittite language from the period of the Old Kingdom (1750-1450BCE) to the Middle period (1450-1380BCE) to New Hittite (1380-1200BCE).

Was ‘literacy’ among the Hittites restricted to scribal literacy? Evidence from the tablets indicates that it may have been more extensive: there are references to slaves who can both read and write. I suspect, from references in the *Birth Rituals* (Beckman 1983), that at least some midwives could read: one passage refers to a certain midwife who ‘puts in a requisition’ for a copy of the actual tablet upon which a certain ritual was recorded, because the midwife hadn’t completely committed it to memory.¹

Were the Hittites ‘literate’ in the extended sense of being ‘cultured’? Apparently, most of the ‘high culture’ of Hittite society (religious songs, ritual, myth) was not original, but borrowed or at least adapted from previous (indigenous) cultures. Although they were not lacking in literary skill – some of their similes and metaphors are highly poetic (‘Loves run like puppies behind her’) – to the best of our knowledge, they didn’t make up their own epics, as did, say, the heavily oral cultures of Greece and India. However, tablets are being uncovered at a fast and furious pace (by archeological standards), so it is always possible that such literary and poetic tracts as these do exist.

Did the Hittites themselves benefit from being a ‘literate’ culture? It has been suggested that a writing system facilitates the establishment of empires. Truly, writing did help to maintain the empire of the Hittites – an empire that rivalled in power and influence that of Egypt – but only for a brief, historical moment. The primary benefit of their literacy has been to posterity: despite their accomplishments, the Hittites were totally wiped

out. Had we not had the good fortune to uncover their vast palace libraries, our only knowledge of this astounding society would have remained a brief biblical mention of poor cuckolded Uriah.

3. *Vedic Sanskrit - Literacy as oral record*

When we consider the sad fate of the Hittites, we may be tempted to agree that written literacy may not be all that it's cracked up to be. The Vedic peoples (1200-800BCE) wrote nothing down. In a sentiment strikingly similar to Plato's, and echoed in Caesar, they considered writing to be a 'crutch' employed to bolster the intellectually bereft. Rather, all of the sacred scriptures, all grammar, all literature, all medical, mathematical and other scientific knowledge was committed to memory and transmitted orally. Indeed, one's entire spiritual, moral, mental and physical well-being depended on having a good memory for the Sacred Scriptures, the Vedas.

The accurate oral transmission of the Vedas was the goal and basis of their educational system. The Vedas were hymns of praise and entreaty directed to the various deities whom the Sanskrit speakers worshipped: if you didn't remember the words, or get the grammar and pronunciation of the hymns right, the deities wouldn't listen or respond to your prayers. That way, the demands of grammar served the needs of religion: 'learn your grammar or burn in hell!' (a threat which, regrettably, no longer holds any sway over students). Typically, a student in a Vedic school would first memorize a text. Once the text had been committed to memory, the content would be discussed, analysed and explained to the student by the 'pandits' or teachers in the schools. Anyone – male or female – who could meet the intellectual standards could attend these schools. Females as well as males could ascend to the highest ranks of professor in these schools: there are words for both male and females highest-ranking teachers: *āchārya* (m), *āchāryā* (f) (Agrawala 1963:283). This type of inclusion certainly benefited women: they are known to have composed several of the Vedic hymns, and to have been full and respected participants in the religious, cultural and social life of this early society (Rahurkar 1985).

Regrettably, around 600 BCE, for complex political, religious and societal reasons, attendance at the Vedic schools began to be increasingly

restricted to males: females were no longer welcome. Taught at home, women's knowledge of the holy scriptures was limited to a few 'token' Vedic verses that they had to chant during certain rituals. Aside from these small concessions, however, they became, predictably, 'ignorant ancillaries' of their husbands (Young 1987:66). Because they were no longer 'in the loop' as it were, they were not privy to the latest fashion in grammar, pronunciation, etc. The brahman caste, who had taken over full control of education, composed rules whose increasing complexity (and deliberately arcane nature) guaranteed that they alone would be considered well educated, possessing the extensive knowledge and learning indicative of a cultured person. They alone could speak the holy language in the proper way: Sanskrit (the word *sam-s-kṛt* means literally 'well put together,' 'cultured'); the others, both males and females, owing to their 'inferior' pronunciation and linguistic skills, were on the outside, speaking what essentially had become a different language: Prakrit.

So we can see that even a culture which doesn't write things down can restrict 'literacy' in the sense of 'high culture' to a small, select, elite group. The issue is not writing or lack thereof, but the human heart: willingness and desire to be inclusive and generous with encouraging wide participation in the learning, education, language and culture of the society, whether that knowledge is transmitted in writing or orally. History has got its revenge, however. Although Sanskrit is for all intents and purposes a dead language, one in every five people on the planet now speaks a(n essentially prakritized) language descended from it.

Despite their failings in the area of inclusiveness, and their prejudice against writing, there is no doubt that the Vedic peoples and their descendants were able to transmit some of the greatest intellectual, poetic, scientific, religious and grammatical works that our species can boast. Although most of that literature has been now written down, the original sources were oral. Regrettably, we know very little about the cognitive effects of the type of memory gymnastics that an extensively oral culture demands, nor how the adoption of writing alters those cognitive abilities. One cannot help but be impressed by and envious of the prodigious feats of memory of which oral cultures, both ancient and modern, are capable, and to feel, as did Caesar, apparently, that something valuable is lost when one resorts to writing things down.

4. *Summary*

Whether it helps or harms a contemporary culture, there is no doubt that written literacy benefits the generations which follow. Written records constitute a “fixation in time and space of an otherwise ephemeral communication”(Vanstiphout 1986:218). In ancient times, the maintenance of an oral record depended on a group of people who knew the relevant works and were able to remember and transmit them. The danger comes, as we see in the vast number of dying languages, when the pool of speakers and transmitters of a language becomes dangerously low. Nowadays, we have ways of ‘fixing’ the discourse without the use of a writing system : the use of recording devices (tapes, CDs, etc) is an indispensable tool for the preservation of an otherwise fragile oral culture.

The incredible intellectual achievements of the Vedic peoples lend support to Harris’ suggestion that ‘literacy’ in its restricted sense of ability to read and write, “contributes far less than has often been supposed to the development of advanced culture, and logical and critical modes of thinking” (1989:40).The Vedic peoples wrote nothing down; yet they transmitted some of the greatest intellectual, poetic, and philosophical works that we have. The Hittites wrote everything down; yet, had it not been for a fortuitous coincidence, we would never have known that this powerful society had ever existed.

Finally, although restriction of ‘literacy’ is usually ascribed to societies with a written language, we have seen that restriction to high culture and language may be accomplished even in a society that transmits all learning orally. Regardless of the type of literacy, written or oral, what is necessary for its furtherance is, as in so many other human endeavours, education and the societal will to be inclusive in the transmission of culture.

Notes

1. Literacy among midwives in ancient societies was not unknown. Harris (1989:275) quotes a certain ancient Greek writer Soranus as saying that a ‘suitable’ midwife “should be acquainted with *grammata* so that she can read and thus add theory to practice.”

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The Effectiveness of Teaching Letter-Sound Associations by Using Rimes and Syllables

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1. *Theoretical background*

In order to read successfully, a child must understand how letters represent the sounds (phonemes) of English. Some children taught whole-word reading do not fully master the rules about spelling-sound correspondences and remain slow readers and poor spellers. On the other hand, some children lack the level of phonemic awareness needed to learn by phonics methods which explicitly teach correspondences between letters and phonemes. (Phonemic awareness refers to the conscious awareness of and ability to manipulate the basic sounds of language called phonemes.)

One approach, which has had some success, is to develop phoneme awareness at the same time as teaching letters to represent phonemes. A different approach is to use phonological units intermediate between words and phonemes for teaching beginning word identification and spelling. Syllables, onsets, and rimes would appear to be suitable units.

Children can segment words into syllables long before they can segment words into phonemes. School-aged children can segment syllables into their onsets (the initial consonant or consonant group) and rimes (the vowel and any following consonants) before they can segment either onset or rime into their constituent phonemes. Treiman and Zukowski (1991, 1996) found that kindergarten and first-grade children can identify words which begin with the same onsets or end with the same rimes, but they cannot always identify words which begin or end with the same phoneme when the phoneme is embedded in the onset or rime. For example, a child might recognize that *cake* and *cookie* begin with the same sound or that *dark* and *spark* end with the same sound because the sounds in question are onsets and rimes. The child might not be able to indicate whether *speed* and *slow* begin with the same sound or whether *school* and *tall* end with the same sound because the critical sounds are individual phonemes embedded in onsets or rimes.

Onset-rime segmentation ability reflects a developmental level of phonological processing that occurs earlier than complete awareness of phonemes. If onsets and rimes are available to young children, whereas phonemes are not, it makes sense to use the available phonological units to teach associations between letter sequences and pronunciation. If children have difficulties with reading and spelling because of undeveloped phonemic awareness, is it possible that, by using earlier developing phonological units, some of the difficulties in reading acquisition can be overcome? Preliminary research is described below which suggests that using pronounceable phonological units (whole syllables and rimes) to teach letter-sound associations is effective both with young normal beginning readers and older students with reading difficulties.

2. Experiment 1: Using onsets and rimes with adolescent poor readers

Penney (2002) tested 33 high school students registered in a course developed for students with reading difficulties. Twenty-one experimental students were taken from their classrooms for 15 to 18 hours of individualized tutoring using the Glass Analysis word identification drills. The 12 control students did not receive the tutoring and remained in their regular classes. Both experimental and control students were given the Word Identification, Word Attack, and Passage Comprehension subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test before and after the experimental students received the tutoring program.

In the tutoring sessions, students read passages aloud and their reading errors were noted. The student then did Glass Analysis drills for the words they had missed and reread the passages. Glass Analysis drills require the student to repeat letter sequences for pronounceable parts of words. In the drills, words are grouped together which have common spelling patterns. The drill is repeated with several words ending with *at* such as *bat*, *mat*, *that*, and *brat*, and then several words of two or more syllables. With multi-syllabic words the student is asked to pronounce letter sequences other than the target (*-at* in this case). For example, with *static*, the student could be asked to pronounce *stat* and *tic* or asked to spell these word fragments. The student is not asked to pronounce isolated phonemes, except for an occasional vowel sound as the *o* in *open*. With complex words, the student might be asked to spell or pronounce whole syllables

(such as *per* or *tion*) or sublexical units of more than one syllable (such as *itious*).

Table 1: Glass Analysis drills

Student sees ...	cat
Tutor says ...	“What is this word? What does cee ay tee say?” If the student says the word correctly, the tutor says “good.”
Tutor says ...	“Cee ay tee says ‘cat.’ ”
Tutor says ...	“Remove the cee. What does ay tee say?” If the student says the word correctly, the tutor says “Good.”
Tutor says ...	“Ay tee says ‘at.’ Can you spell ‘cat’?”

The word *bat* is written, and the drill is repeated with this word. Other words containing *at* are introduced and the drill is repeated for each word. If the word contains two or more syllables, the student is asked to spell pronounceable syllables or combinations of syllables as well as the target rime unit.

2.1. Results

The tutoring program produced larger increases in Word Identification, Word Attack and Passage Comprehension scores for the experimental than for the control students. (See Table 2.) ANCOVAs on post-test scores with pre-test scores as the covariate showed a significant group effect ($p < .05$) for Word Attack, and highly significant effects ($p < .001$) for both Word Identification and Passage Comprehension.

3. Experiment 2: Using onsets and rimes for teaching beginning readers

Simms-Lodge (incomplete masters thesis, Memorial University) tested the rime-based method with children at the end of their kindergarten year before they received formal reading instruction in school. Twenty-eight

experimental children were matched to 28 control children on a variety of measures (see Table 3) and the experimental children were taught 60 words in 15 families of 4 rhyming words.

Table 2: Mean raw scores (and standard deviations) on reading measures for control and experimental students

Treatment Group and Assessment				
	Experimental (n = 21)		Control (n = 12)	
Measure	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Word Identification	66.3	75.9	69.9	74
(Max = 106)	(13.6)	(16.5)	(13.9)	(16.8)
Word Attack	22.3	28.0	26.2	27.3
Max = 45	(10.5)	(11.4)	(9.6)	(10.6)
Passage Comprehension	35.7	43.3	41.3	43.6
Max = 68	(8.0)	(8.8)	(7.7)	(8.9)

Training was done over five days with a maximum of one hour per day. Children were individually taught four words in each of three word families per day. The experimenter pointed to each word, pronounced it, and asked the child to spell it. The experimenter showed how the words shared certain letter sequences. Each word was read and spelled three times by the child in a training session.

After the last training session, a retention test was administered (see Table 4). In addition to the 60 words that had been taught (the trained words), an additional 60 words (the transfer words) were also tested which had not been taught but were from the taught rime families.

One year after completion of the training program, the experimental and control children were retested on all measures administered at the pretest. (See Table 5)

Table 3: Comparison of trained and control children on pre-test measures

Measure	Trained Group	Control Group
¹ Peabody Vocabulary	102.8	
¹ WRAT - Spelling	105.3	
¹ WRAT - Reading	105.4	
¹ WRAT - Arithmetic	106.3	
Letter-and-Number-Naming Times (sec)	72.3	
Odd Man Out	10.4	
Phoneme Tapping	4.7	
Rhyme Production	8.4	
Rosner	7.3	
Target Words Read	13.1	
125 Frequent Words	21.4	
p > .10 for all tests, df = 26		
¹ Age-based standard scores are reported for Peabody and WRAT tests. Raw scores are provided for all other tests.		

3.1. Results

On the pre-test no significant differences were found on any measure between the 28 children who received the training program and the 28 matched control children. (See Table 3.)

On the retention test all children were found to have learned to read a substantial number of words in the training program. No significant

differences were found between children of low and high phoneme segmentation ability on either trained or transfer words. (See Table 4.)

Word identification was higher when the words were tested in rime family groups (grouped condition) rather than having the words tested in random order (ungrouped condition). Having the known words present helps children read by analogy using familiar orthographic rimes. (See Table 4.)

Table 4: Mean numbers of trained and transfer words read correctly on the retention test but not read on pre-test

Test Condition	High Phonological	Low Phonological
Ungrouped		
Trained Words	29.6	25.5
Transfer Words	9.8	7.4
Grouped		
Trained Words	45.3	44.1
Transfer Words	36.8	33.1
p > .05 for all comparisons of high- and low-segmenters.		

On the follow-up test one year later, children who received the training program had significantly larger gain scores than control children in vocabulary knowledge (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test), word identification (125 Frequent Words and the set of target words), phonemic awareness (Odd Man Out, Phoneme Tapping, Rhyme Generation Task), and WRAT Arithmetic. (See Table 5.)

4. Experiment 3: A longitudinal study with school-aged poor readers

Sixteen school-aged children ranging in age from 7 years, 8 months to 17 years participated in a longitudinal study. The children were referred for difficulty with reading. The reading and spelling achievement of the children was assessed, and they were given a number of phonological

processing tests. The children's scores on various measures are shown in Table 6.

After the initial assessment, there was a control period during which the children received no treatment, and the parents were asked not to enrol the children in private tutoring programs for reading. Many of the children were receiving extra help in school for their reading and spelling difficulties. After at least six months, the children were reassessed, and then entered a tutoring program in which they received 30 hours of individualized tutoring using the Glass Analysis procedure of Experiment 1. After the tutoring program was completed (which required a period of at least six months), the children were again reassessed.

To assess reading achievement, four subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test were administered: Word Identification, Word Attack, Word Comprehension, and Passage Comprehension. To assess spelling achievement, the spelling subtest of the Wide Range Achievement Test and the Predictable Words subtest of the Test of Written Spelling were administered.

If the tutoring program is effective, greater gains in reading and spelling should be seen during the experimental than during the control period. If the tutoring program is not effective, one would expect a linear increase from the first to the third assessments.

4.1 Results

The average time interval between the first and second assessments (the control period) was 8.4 months ($sd = 4.7$), and the average interval between the second and third assessments (the experimental period) was 10.6 months ($sd = 3.76$). The difference in means was not statistically significant ($t(15) = 1.28, p > .05$).

Linear increases in scores were significant for all measures, but the quadratic component was statistically significant only for the Passage Comprehension ($F(1,15) = 20.5, p < .001$), the TWS Predictable Words ($F(1,15) = 28.1, p < .001$), and the WRAT Spelling ($F(1,13) = 7.64, p < .02$). The significant quadratic component indicates that the difference

between control and experimental periods was statistically significant. Thus, the tutoring program produced significantly greater improvements in Passage Comprehension and spelling during the tutoring than the control period.

Table 5: Mean gain scores for trained and control groups on all test measures

Measure	Trained Group	Control Group
¹ Peabody Vocabulary	10.2	0.8 **
¹ WRAT - Spelling	3.2	6.9
¹ WRAT - Reading	7.9	2.7
¹ WRAT - Arithmetic	9.4	4.9 *
Letter-and-Number-Naming Times (sec)	2.6	2.4
Odd Man Out	5.2	1.7 **
Phoneme Tapping	3.1	0.1 **
Rhyme Production	7.9	4.9 *
Rosner	11.5	10.2
Target Words Read	100.0	76.0 **
125 Frequent Words	90.9	74.3 **
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$		
¹ Gains are in standard scores for the Peabody and WRAT tests. Otherwise gains are in raw scores.		

Table 6: Means, standard deviations, and ranges for standard scores on Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests, Listening Comprehension, Peabody Vocabulary, and Raven's Progressive Matrices

	Mean	SD	Range
Word Identification	73.6	17.5	46 - 96
Word Attack	73.8	14.3	41 - 94
Passage Comprehension	79.6	16.7	53 - 120
Word Comprehension	82.3	16.2	56 - 116
WRAT Spelling	80.1	7.8	68 - 93
Test of Written Spelling	74.6	7.8	61 - 88
Listening Comprehension	103.4	14.6	70 - 132
Peabody Vocabulary	100.0	13.5	81 - 122
Raven's Matrices	105.1	18.5	73 - 139

In Experiment 1, significantly greater increases in both Word Identification and Word Attack were obtained for the experimental than control participants, but in Experiment 3, the increases for these measures over the experimental period were larger than the increases over the control period but not significantly so.

5. Conclusions from Experiments 1, 2, and 3

The use of the Glass Analysis word identification drills to teach associations between pronounceable sublexical phonological units such as rimes and syllables is effective in increasing reading and spelling achievement in school-aged children with reading difficulties. Even though reading comprehension strategies were not taught, improvements in word identification and word attack (in Experiment 1) and in spelling (Experiment 3) were accompanied by increased reading comprehension.

Use of the Glass Analysis drills is also effective in increasing word identification skills in normal beginning readers. Children trained to read words from rime families showed some transfer of learning to words of the same families which had not been taught. One year after the training program, trained children showed not only retention of what they had learned, but showed transfer to words which did not belong to the trained families. The trained children also showed significantly greater growth in vocabulary and arithmetic skills than did the control children.

Notes

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Teaching the Spelling and Pronunciation of Irish Through Linguistic Principles

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1. Introduction

Irish is a minority language and an endangered one. Literacy has played a crucial role in pulling it back from the brink of extinction over the past 100 years.

In the late 1800s, the Irish became aware that very few people under the age of 50 spoke Irish any more. Whereas half the population of Ireland spoke Irish as their first language as late as 1850, the language had not been passed on, except in a few remote districts, to the generation that was born around that time. It seemed that Irish was headed for extinction within the lifetime of its remaining speakers. Consequently, in the 1890s, a campaign to save the language was launched. Teachers were hired, classes were set up around the country, dictionaries compiled and grammars and texts of the language written.

Over the next several decades, the spelling was revised and simplified to make literacy in the language more attainable for people learning Irish as a second language, and a blue-ribbon panel of linguists created an official standard for the language, forming a middle ground among its three chief dialects. In addition, a concerted effort was made to create a modern literature in the language. Scholars collected folksongs, folktales, and oral histories from the remaining native speakers and transcribed them into the revised modern spelling. Medieval and early modern Irish texts and manuscripts were published in modern Irish. And, throughout the 20th century, many new works were written in Irish so that now there is a large literature in all genres of fiction and non-fiction, at all levels from children's picture books to scholarly works. One lesson that the history of the Irish language revival may offer to other endangered languages is that developing a living body of literature in the language is crucial to success.

Despite these successes, however, many people who speak Irish, whether as native speakers or as second-language learners, fail to attain more than rudimentary reading and writing skills in the language. I have observed this in adult language classes in Ireland as well as in my role as an

internet tutor. In my view, there are two main reasons for this failure. First, the Gaelic spelling system is complex and its method for mapping sounds to letters is quite different from that used for English. Secondly, Irish texts and teaching methods do not explicitly explain the spelling system to students, but rather expect them to learn the sounds of letter combinations and the pronunciation of individual words by rote.

The difficulty faced by the beginning student can be shown by any bit of Gaelic text, such as this verse from a well-known folk song:

*A dhroimeann donn dílis, a shíoda na mbó,
Cá ngabhann tú san oíche, cá mbíonn tú sa ló ?
Bímse ar no coillte 's mo bhuachaill im' chomhair
'S d' fhág sé siúd mise ag sileadh na ndeor.*

Because of the many strange letter combinations, inserted vowels, and palatalized consonants, the pronunciation of these words differs considerably from what an English reader would expect to hear. Yet this spelling is phonetic and highly predictable within the Irish spelling system. Indeed, Irish spelling is entirely logical and firmly based on linguistic principles. Once I realized this, I began to base my teaching of Irish on its natural phonetic patterns and to teach the spelling system explicitly according to those patterns. My aim is to enable students to sound out words and texts as soon as possible, and thus to make all their reading and writing assignments easier. By using this approach, I hope to learn whether teaching linguistic patterns explicitly can improve reading skills in Irish.

What follows is a brief description of the rules of Irish spelling and the phonetic patterns which can be used to teach them.

2. The Irish spelling system

The Irish spelling system was designed to solve several problems unique to Celtic languages. The reasons for its complexity are:

- Irish spelling must express more than 70 phonemes with only 12 consonants and 5 vowels; thus, most phonemes are expressed with letter combinations.

- Vowels are inserted into many syllables to indicate palatalized and velarized consonants.
- Irish words ‘mutate’ in three different ways; the spelling system adds extra consonants to the word to signal these changes while keeping the basic form of the word clearly visible on the page.

Consequently there are at least 35 consonant combinations to be recognized in both palatalized and velar variants as well as at least 30 vowel combinations. In learning to read Irish, a student must not only learn the many letter combinations, but also to scan two to five characters at a time to identify the right phonemes. And, because the decoding process is logically different, the reader must switch from English spelling logic to Irish spelling logic in a way that is not required when learning other foreign languages. This is initially hard to do though it becomes natural with practice.

3. *The traditional teaching method*

Traditional Irish textbooks include few linguistic insights when presenting the spelling system. Usually, the letters and letter combinations are simply listed, in *alphabetical* order, along with their sound values. A typical listing for consonants and their leniting mutations - the mutation which is spelled by putting the letter *h* after the consonant - would look something like this:

- b - bh is pronounced like a w when word-initial and broad; like a v when word-initial and slender; always as v at the end of word; usually silent when medial;
- c - as the ch in ‘loch’ when broad; like the h in Hugh or ‘ich’ when slender;
- d - as an English d when broad, like a ‘j’ when slender; when word initial, dh as gh when broad and as a y when slender; silent at the end of words; as y when medial.
- f - fh is silent
- g - when word initial, gh rather like a French ‘r’ when broad and as y when slender; silent at the end of words; as y when medial.
- m -mh is pronounced like a w when word-initial and broad; like a v when word-initial and slender; always as v at the end of word, usually silent when medial.

and so on, for each consonant that can be lenited.

Presented in alphabetical order, the list obscures the underlying patterns which exist among the consonants. For example, it would take a keen eye to see, in such a list, the close resemblance between the lenited sound values for *bh* and *mh*, for *ch* and *gh*, and even though a clue is given in the text, the close relationship of *dh* and *gh*.

Similarly, the eclipsing mutations are usually presented in alphabetical order. (In these letter pairs, only the first is pronounced. Thus an eclipsed /b/ is pronounced as an /m/, an eclipsed /c/ as a /g/ and so forth.) For example:

base letter	b	c	d	g	p	t
eclipsed letter	mb	gc	nd	ng	bp	dt

The 30 or more vowel combinations and their sound values, if presented at all, are also given in an alphabetical list.

These alphabetical lists of sound values leave the student with the task of learning more than 70 letter combinations by rote – a formidable amount of apparently random detail.

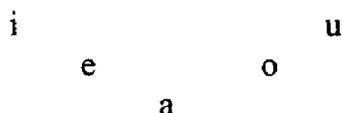
4. A linguistic approach to teaching Irish spelling

A more effective approach, I believe, is to begin by teaching the patterns of homorganic consonants and the position of vowels in vowel space, and then to teach the rule which pairs vowels with consonants to indicate the quality of adjacent consonants. Later, rules for inserting silent vowels into syllables can be taught based on these patterns. In a step by step manner, the pronunciation of the consonant letter combinations can be introduced in a logical manner based on these patterns. Other simple rules demystify most of the vowel combinations. In all, there are about ten aspects of Irish spelling for which such explanations are helpful. The system of spelling rules and sound changes is not completely regular, alas, so students must still memorize some arbitrary material, but this approach greatly reduces the total amount of memorization required.

The following examples demonstrate the method for some of the more important rules.

4.1 *Vowel space and the marking of consonant quality*

The students begin by learning the diagram of vowel space and learning that /i/ and /e/ are ‘front’ vowels while /a, o, u/ are ‘back’ vowels. (A mid-vowel to linguists, /a/ functions as a back vowel in modern Irish.)



Next comes the concept of ‘broad’ and ‘slender’ consonants, which in Irish terminology refers mostly to velarized and palatalized consonants. With C standing for any velarized consonant and with C’ standing for any palatalized consonant, the spelling rule states that every palatalized consonant (C’) must be adjacent to a front vowel and that every velarized consonant (C) must be adjacent to a back vowel:



(This rule is a key part of the traditional teaching methods for Irish, the only linguistically-based rule that is, to my knowledge.) The pronunciation of the two sets of consonants is then taught with special attention to the differences between broad and slender /t, d, s, r/.

4.2 *The mutations and the chart of homorganic consonants*

The students are asked to memorize the following diagram of the consonants:

	p	f		t	s		c
+ voice	b			d			g
+ nasal	m			n			ng

The presence of the fricatives /f/ and /s/ in this diagram may seem strange to linguists, but these consonants are part of the basic 'set' of Irish consonants and putting them into the diagram in this way makes sense within the system of mutations.

The rule for *eclipsis* – the mutation that adds + voice or + nasal to an initial consonant of a word according to specified grammatical rules – can now be taught from this diagram as a 'one-step down rule'. Thus /p/ is eclipsed to /b/, /b/ to /m/, /t/ to /d/, and so forth. From this point it is simple to state the spelling rule that places the new sound to the left of the original consonant at the beginning of the word:

e.g.	picnic	becomes	bpicnic
	cat		gcat

The pattern for *lenition* (the softening mutation) are not quite as neat and regular, but the consonant diagram still organizes most of the sound changes in a helpful way. For most, but not all of the consonants, lenition changes a stop to its homorganic fricative:

/p/ > /f/ /f/ > /ø/ (zero) /t,s/ > /h/ /c/ > /x/

/b/ > /w,v/ /d/ > /ʎ,j/ /g/ > /ʎ,j/

/m/ > /w,v/

The two phonemes shown for lenited b, m, d, and g are for the velarized and palatalized forms of the consonants, respectively. Thus, /b/ > /w/ while /b' / > /v' /.

In spelling, the change in sound is indicated by inserting the letter *h* after the lenited consonant. Thus:

<i>ph</i> is pronounced	/f/	<i>fh</i> is silent	<i>th</i> is pronounced	/h/
<i>bh</i>	/w or v/		<i>sh</i>	/h/
<i>mh</i>	/w or v/		<i>ch</i>	/x/

4.3 Vowel combinations

A vowel can appear alone in a syllable if it matches, in quality, the adjacent consonant(s) – i.e. if a back vowel is next to a velarized consonant or a front vowel is next to a palatalized consonant:

e.g. *cat* *cos* *lúb* *cic* *gé*
 /k a t/ /k o s/ /l u: b/ /k' i k' / /g' e: /

However, if the quality of the vowel does not match the palatalized or velarized quality of an adjacent consonant, a front or back vowel must be added to the spelling to indicate the quality of the consonant. These ‘filler’ vowels are either totally silent or are just barely audible as brief glides. Thus a syllable which has only one clearly pronounced vowel may be spelled with two or three vowels.

e.g. *cead* *cait* *tuig* *fios* *cois* *ciúin* *buíon*
 /k' a d/ /k a t'/ /t i g'/ /f' i s/ /k o s'/ /k' u: n'/ /b i: n/

By my count, this process results in thirty different vowel combinations. There are only thirty because the choice of ‘filler’ vowels is not random. Still, learning to pronounce such a large set of combinations is a significant challenge to students.

Fortunately, the amount of memorization involved can be much reduced by noting that in any combination that includes a long vowel, only the long vowel is pronounced.

e.g. *uí*, *ío*, *uío* /i:/ *eá*, *ái*, *eái* /a:/ *iú*, *úi*, *iúi* /u:/

This leaves 11 vowel combinations to be memorized:

ia /i:ə/ *ae* /e:/ *ei* /e/ *ea*, *ai* /a/
ua /u:ə/ *eo* /o:/ *oi* /o/ *ui*, *io* /i/
ao /i:/

While linguistic explanations can be offered for each of these vowel pairs, it is in practice easier to teach them by practice drills. One final detail, however, is that the six vowel combinations for short vowels (*ei*, *oi*, *ea*, *ai*, *ui*, *io*) are in fact pronounced as shown only in stressed syllables. In

unstressed syllables, they are reduced to schwa. This poses little difficulty for students because the stress patterns in Irish are simple and predictable. Except for compounds, clitics, and some prefixes, stress falls only on the first syllable of a word.

Finally, there are four multi-letter combinations to be learned for the diphthongs /ai/ and /au/ and the consonant sequences which require the pronunciation of schwa as an epenthetic vowel. For the latter, the chart of homorganic consonants shown in 4.2 is very helpful.

5. Classroom experience

Though teaching the phonetic basis of Irish spelling can simplify the task of learning to read and write the language, there is still too much detail for students to absorb quickly. Hence, I have written a manual which explains the system in a series of 35 brief lessons. Starting with the simplest words, more detail is gradually added until the most complicated multisyllable words are covered. But spelling is not taught in isolation. Grammar and vocabulary form the basis of the course but some work on spelling and pronunciation is done in every class until the students finish the manual around the end of the fifteenth week. Work on the manual is supplemented by oral drills in class and practice sounding out unfamiliar words.

In the absence of empirical evidence, I can only compare my impressions of the achievements of two classes of college students I have taught. The first was taught spelling somewhat cursorily, beginning late in the first term; the second was taught spelling systematically right from the beginning, using the manual. Also, in the second class, more classroom time was spent sounding out unfamiliar words. No marks were deducted for poor spelling in either class. I noticed three basic differences between the achievements of the two classes. Spelling errors virtually disappeared from the written work of students in the second class early in the second semester, whereas students in the first class continued to make many serious errors right to the end of the course. The students in the second class were able to sound out unfamiliar text such as proverbs with some ease by the end of the second semester, whereas the first class did not reach this level of ability or confidence. And finally, I had the strong impression that the second class was having less difficulty in learning vocabulary in the second

semester, something I suggest may be due to their greater ability to sound out the words, as needed, when studying.

It is on this basis that I recommend this linguistics-based approach to Irish spelling to other teachers, in the hope that it helps other college-age and adult students to achieve a solid basis of literacy in the language.

**II. Approaches to Local Languages: Aboriginal,
Acadian French, and English/
Études des langues locales: Langues
autochtones, français acadien et anglais**

Critically Examining the Development of an Encyclopædic Dictionary for Migmaq

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1. Introduction

In this paper, we discuss the process of constructing an encyclopædic dictionary of an indigenous language. The issues which we will examine are the relevance and usefulness of encyclopædic dictionaries, the ideologies underlying the discourses put forward by the players in this arena, and a discussion of some of the tangibly difficult issues involved in the design and implementation of such a dictionary in the Migmaq contexts. Throughout, we discuss how building such a dictionary can result in the implementation of a programme of critical language awareness. Critical language awareness is generally defined as having to do with awareness of the ideologies underlying different discourses and the social contexts within which language use is non-transparent.

2. The concepts of ‘relevance’ and ‘usefulness’

Relevance and usefulness can mean different things to different people in the context of indigenous lexicography. In an ideal academic world, science should be free of any ideological ties or pressures, a reality which is reflected in the notion of “academic freedom.” However, recent developments in the social sciences have introduced newly defined ethical and practical constraints that must be taken into account when setting objectives and determining methodology as regards the relevance and usefulness of a scientific enterprise. The ideologies underlying the commitments of various protagonists to different sorts of scientific inquiry can also be reflected in research choices.

In the context of our research, that is, the context of putting together a bilingual dictionary for the contemporary Migmaq language, the first question to ask is: “Is the making of an encyclopædic dictionary a scientific enterprise in the first place?” Should the answer to this question be positive, two corollary questions arise:

1. What is the relevance and usefulness of such a dictionary?

2. How does this relevance and usefulness create specific constraints on the scientific objectives, methodology and results?

Since the reformulation of ethical principles in many scientific fields of research – particularly those concerning the use of human subjects – social scientists have become more constrained in what they can research and where they can conduct that research. They are also forced to justify the rationale for their research to an extent that was unheard of even 25 years ago. In the mid-eighties, for instance, the American Anthropological Association rewrote its code of ethics, taking a dramatic step to move away from research preoccupied with the interest of science first to research whose primary focus is on furthering the interests of subjects, i.e. the interests of the peoples whose language, culture, social organization and customs are to be the object of investigation.

More recently, the three Canadian Councils of Research (SSHRC, NSERC, MRC) have joined forces to rethink the ethical standards that they impose on subsidized research carried out in Canada. The resulting code of ethics is much stricter than before, stressing the need to justify the relevance and usefulness of one's research and to act with seriousness and responsibility in all research circumstances. Notwithstanding the breadth and the depth of the Tricouncil requirements and expectations, this should be seen as a positive development, which should serve to initiate a rapprochement between the academy and the world it is to investigate and serve, obliging academic praxis and the elimination of a power boundary that created a difference of interests between researchers and subjects. It should also encourage academics who work with endangered languages to pull away from the hermetic world of discursive closure that academe sometimes has been. It should also be a reminder that whatever 'neutral' stand scientists tried to take in the past era, they are and will continue to be agents for change in a 'real world' populated by 'real people.'

Let us now answer the first question formulated here above: "Is the making of an encyclopædic dictionary a scientific enterprise?" First we must ask ourselves what it means to do science. This is a difficult and large question which one cannot address in a paragraph. However, it is possible to make a couple of general comments. Science, in the narrow sense, is a matter of formulating a hypothesis, testing it on a body of empirical facts and deducing a theory from this testing. This is a simplified definition of the hypothetical-deductive model used in the natural sciences, especially

physics. From this point of view, the making of a dictionary is not a scientific enterprise. However, should we adopt a more Aristotelian definition of science, as a body of knowledge which is systematically organized, according to some internal criterion, such as to be utilizable by specific communities (including the community of hypothetical-deductive scientists), then making an encyclopædic dictionary is a scientific enterprise, and is subject to ethical principles, among which figure those of relevance and usefulness.

Once the question of science is laid to rest, we have to ask two corollary questions:

1. What is relevance and usefulness?
2. Does relevance and usefulness create specific constraints on our scientific objectives, methodology and results?

The *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (1998) provides a definition of *relevance* as: “[the propriety of] bearing on or having reference to the matter at hand.” It defines ‘usefulness’ as: “1. that can be used for a practical purpose, beneficial. 2. of use and value to someone, helpful.” To fully understand these definitions in the perspective of ethical concerns and critical language awareness, one should keep in mind that, from the point of view of cognitive psychology, some stimulus is relevant to a person if it causes that person to derive significant or reasonable cognitive effects (Sperber & Wilson 1995). This cognitive aspect is an important one to take into consideration, because in the context of defining a programme of critical language awareness, it is necessary to provide an environment where indigenous thoughts and ideas will be highly salient and attractive. Indeed, creating a context where indigenous ideas seem out of place or less salient than majority language ideas will lead to the growing irrelevance of the indigenous language and the unique concepts and cultural contexts it encodes. In our view, a dictionary for an endangered language must create a cognitive context in which indigenous ideas will have significant psychological saliency and effect.

If we take the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* entries for ‘relevance’ and ‘usefulness’ at face value, the definitions mentioned above appear to be simple and easy to understand. The fact becomes much more complex when one comes to identify the real referents behind words such as ‘the matter at hand,’ ‘practical purpose,’ ‘someone’ and to assign a reasonable value to

scalar adjectives such as ‘beneficial’ and ‘helpful.’ Basing ourselves on the notion of a cognitive environment, the meanings and implications of these words will depend on who is using them and in what ideological contextual schema they are being used.

Let us now turn to the three main groups of people involved in the making of an encyclopædic dictionary of the Migmaq language and culture, i.e. the scholarly community,¹ the Migmaq communities and the granting agencies. We will try to identify what is relevant and useful to these three groups of people and bring out some of the ideological underpinnings of these definition

2.1. Relevance and usefulness to the scholarly community

What is the relevance and usefulness of making an encyclopædic dictionary of Migmaq for the scientific community? For the community of linguists, relevance and usefulness usually correspond to a dictionary that will represent an increase in the availability and quality of data, according to linguistic scientific criteria: entries extracted from ‘natural discourse’ or ‘natural texts,’ grammatical information (part of speech, gender, number, transitivity, etc.), etymology, lexical and phonetic variation tagged for regional, generational and gender identification, connotation (prestige, casual, derogatory, etc.), as well as sentential examples, also from natural discourse.

Ideally, linguists would also find it helpful to find mentions of the words having appeared in previous dictionaries. Most linguists would also be satisfied with a simple translation of each word into English – the need for an encyclopædic content being less relevant for them in the study of the grammatical structure and wellformedness conditions of Migmaq, in the construction of a formal grammar for the language, or in the study of the language’s structures and how they confirm or contradict general linguistic theories. Other scholars such as anthropologists and ethnographers would certainly like to see a more extensive description of the concepts expressed through the words.

For most members of the scientific/linguistic community, those features are certainly what is essential if the dictionary is to be a helpful tool, the use of which will in turn be beneficial in the advancement of linguistic knowledge in general. However, the financial cost and timeframe necessary

to achieve such a dictionary make the construction of a dictionary containing such exhaustive documentation of a language impossible to achieve in the current circumstances of financial support, unless one commits a whole career to it. In the context of difficult access to funding and research time, this is a difficult thing to justify, as current neo-liberal trends in the academy (Fairclough 1993) shift the focus away from long-term projects aimed at wide-spread and/or synthetic coverage, in favor of small, directed projects of narrow scope, which study a specific theoretical phenomenon (or sub-phenomenon) in great detail. Thus, devoting many years (if not a career) to the construction of such a project, is risky, given academic demands regarding the number of articles, books, conference papers and the growing amount of teaching and service necessary to gain tenure and be promoted. In fact, given the rapid rate of language loss and extinguishment, in the Migmaq nation among so many others, the construction of such an exhaustive dictionary might only result in a technical museum piece, stored in an archive, somewhere, under the rubric 'disappeared language.' We ruefully note that science would need to be able to reverse time and rely on trained missionary linguists to accomplish such an opus. Thus the necessary approach is an incremental one with multiple subsequent editions, and the move to a new modality (such as electronic internet publication). Furthermore, we note that in the context of the preservation and subsequent encouragement of an endangered language, the community of linguists probably still represents a group with extraordinary hegemonic power. Indeed the community of linguists hold several of the keys – discursive and material-cultural – to solving the problem. Creating a willingness to admit to our power, as well as looking for solutions including, beyond financial and methodological ones, the establishment of equal and fair partnerships with the Native communities, is a great challenge faced by those linguists who would resist against their own hegemonic status.

2.2. Relevance and usefulness to the Migmaq communities

The Migmaq communities have a different view of what is needed in a dictionary. Of course, none of the linguistic-scientific features mentioned in the previous section would be a nuisance to educators, writers and policy makers in the communities, but in the context of a seriously endangered language like Migmaq, waiting the twenty years or so needed for the construction of such a dictionary² is neither helpful nor beneficial. Interviews and informal discussions have indicated to us that there is a

certain level of resentment towards the community of linguists (Cyr 1999a:275 and 1999b:284), who are seen as external agents who entered into the Migmaq world, took what they needed to further their science (and their careers) and disappeared, leaving behind very highly theoretical descriptions of parts of the language, which were not utilizable for the development of curriculum material. Communities are in fact in dire need of dictionaries and descriptive grammars that will help educators prepare better teaching materials and thus help reinforcing a trend of cultural and linguistic reappropriation. It also means the beginning of a programme of critical language awareness. According to Fairclough (1992:232):

Language training without language awareness is bound to be language legitimization: that is, it is bound to present problematical and contentious language practices ideologically as simply the way things are done. The development of the learner's language practice should be fully integrated with the concept of language awareness.

In our view, this means that a dictionary must not only be easily searchable, in terms of lexical and semantic fields, word agreement, i.e. gender and transitivity, but also (and most importantly) inform their teaching material preparation and scholarship in cultural terms, i.e. provide information as to what specific cultural values are carried through the words. We find that, as the makers of such a dictionary, we are responsible to put efforts and emphasis also on cultural relevance. We also find it necessary to trust and privilege the perspective of Native speakers whose knowledge and even scholarship about the culture in question is undeniable. Sometimes, we linguists are so keen on fitting everything into our so called 'universal grammatical frames' that we dismiss many potentially relevant comments from the speakers consulted. For example, when the speaker describing his/her language notes that it is sometimes hard to distinguish between the verbalness versus nouniness of a word, most of us would react by establishing binary criteria to fit the word into one or the other category, while this intercategory fuzziness is probably an essential feature of the language and perfectly relevant to its description. In our dictionary many occurrences were indeed entered by the Native lexicographer as intransitive verbs and given definitions corresponding to nouns and vice versa. After much debate and discussion, we opted not to interfere and to let the language and the language speakers speak among themselves for themselves.

We, as lexicographers, decided that we must also trust the linguistic intuition of native speakers/readers when deciding on the ‘naturalness’ of such and such a corpus fragment. An example of a conflict between the naturalness decision of a linguist and that of native speakers has to do with what is considered a text that could be admissible into the dictionary. Some linguists have criticized a particular text, i.e. the *Setanoei/Micmac Messenger*, written by previous generations of Migmaq elders as non-natural because the corpus is not spoken language and because the texts have been published under the editorship of a non-native Migmaq speaker.³ Yet when we asked a native speaker who is considered by her community as an excellent speaker⁴ to read this document aloud, she says that “it sounded like excellent old Migmaq.”⁵

Such data should hence be taken into account. In fact, in the context of language transmission through schooling only, as is more and more the case in most Migmaq communities, a dictionary may soon come to play the role of a language standard. Should one accept this notion, it will have an impact on the range of variation that one will include in the dictionary. From a linguistic perspective, the more variation included in a dictionary, the better it is, because it reflects the ‘real, objective situation.’ In terms of the speaking community, it is probable that cataloguing variation would probably be perceived as a good idea, because each speaker could find her/his own variety and feel confirmed as a good speaker. However, this is an idealized scenario that exists only in the mind of the person constructing a mental image of the situation. Observation *in situ* speaks eloquently (and often painfully) about the constant and counter-productive struggle between speakers of different varieties when no standard is made available. We need look no further than the example of children telling their teachers that they don't need to listen to them because their mother says the teachers don't speak good Migmaq. Often all that this sort of comment means is that the mother or grandmother doesn't speak the same variety as the teacher. Another example concerns the fact that we have seen adult students/teachers dropping courses on Migmaq grammar because they were constantly reprimanded by other students speaking a different variety.

However ‘unnatural’ it may seem to the scientific community, the fact of proposing what is considered by a majority of speakers as a ‘higher-status form’ alongside with different varieties would be a tentative way to start solving the question of language awareness. Indeed, it would be a gateway to introducing the notion of community-internal language planning

as opposed to community-external language planning. In our opinion, given the degree of endangerment reached by the Migmaq language at the present time, combined with the degree of linguistic variation across the Migmaq territory, community-internal planning achieved on a pan-Migmaq consensus is a condition *sine qua non* to language survival. Someone has to make the compromise and show the way. If such a consensus does not soon emerge spontaneously at the community level, then we suggest that it may be considered the responsibility of the scientific community to make the protagonists aware of the history, costs and benefits of language-planning for other successful languages, and initiate the discussion.

Thus a critical observation of the notion of linguistic variation, without an accompanying development of language awareness, may lead to more deeply entrenched divisions between different groups of speakers. A description of language variation is a perfectly sound scientific approach. However, describing variation in endangered languages without making speakers aware of its implications is somewhat risky. If a language is to survive in our highly mediated competitive world, internal planning has to be undertaken alongside with external planning. A probable, albeit more fatalistic outcome of the lack of language awareness might be that speakers of different dialect origin will remain disinclined to speak to each other in Migmaq, choosing English as a practical and neutral standard. This is something we have witnessed in the pan-Migmaq polyglossy. Ironically, by being true to their theoretical precepts, linguists may be unwittingly reinforcing a hegemonic relationship with the Migmaq. By applying the data-gathering and data-selection protocols of theoretical linguistics to the construction of an encyclopædic dictionary, a research enterprise having larger social and political ramifications that does abstract linguistic theory, we may be avoiding social and political issues related to language planning on the one hand, yet on the other we might contribute to increasing the pace of the disappearance process. Although maintaining the linguistic ideal of respect of language variation, in fact, a dominant ideology of how languages should be described and planned, the approach taken by North American linguists, might play a significant role in the disappearance of the Migmaq language. This is not to say that variation should not be described. Rather, it should be described along with explanations of its role at the oral level and its cost at the written one.

2.3 Relevance and usefulness to the granting agencies

The concept of relevance and usefulness in the perspective of granting agencies is yet another matter. There is no question that the guiding principle of the granting agencies is to be fair to all applicants and to distribute subsidies in a just and equitable fashion. However, the conflict of interest between scientific objectives and indigenous community objectives often produces a gap into which many applications fall. This approach is adjunct to the fact that granting agencies are, to a certain extent, subject to the political will of the political party in power, a will which is in turn influenced by the ideologies underlying it.⁶ Some manifestations of this influence pertain to the structure and the political agendas of the granting agencies themselves, but it is questionable whether one can impute any will to an agency whose budget and existence is motivated by capital that is distributed by the government. Currently the trend is to favor so-called 'practical research' and thus funding to 'unnecessary' or 'frivolous' fields such as cultural studies and endangered language preservation enjoy less status.

Another fact that influences adjudicating committees, although it is rarely overtly expressed, is the fact that many jury members seem to think that projects on indigenous languages can be sponsored by Heritage Canada, which is rarely the case. Along the same lines, some jury members still think that Canada already spends too much on indigenous issues, so that the money from the granting agencies should be spared for 'neutral' (*viz.* white) science projects.⁷ This sort of discourse is unfortunately quite prevalent, even in progressive arenas such as the academy.

Facts and attitudes such as these can be very damaging to grant applications. Heuristics for the evaluation of scientific objectives can be limitless (and quite subjective) and assessors who aim at 'the best' in science may end up writing things that are misinterpreted by adjudicating committees thus confusing their judgment. For instance, from a narrow scientific perspective making a dictionary may be judged as not innovative enough because it does not entail specific theoretical problems.⁸ Judgments of value can also arise from the gap between the ideal and the feasible. Hence an application may be judged in the light of what should ideally be done instead of what can reasonably be done. The problem with this situation is that what should ideally be done is also largely a matter of opinion. Some assessors favor result dissemination in highly specialized

refereed journals while others will favor dissemination at the level of communities first. It is very possible that two adjudicators will criticize a project based on two completely different sets of criteria, conditioned by their ideological commitments. Unfortunately, the adjudicating committee will often read such remarks as two negative points instead of choosing one of the perspectives. In short, because SSHRC as a granting agency can fund only two thirds of the applications, almost any conflicting comments from two different assessors will be interpreted as a point against the proposed project. Thus different orders of discourse (Foucault 1971), reflecting the differing priorities of the two communities: those who study and try to preserve endangered languages and those who engage in more mainstream scientific research.

Another important problem relates to the nature of the differences between scientific objectives and community objectives and in the way these may influence the agencies through their adjudicating committees. At the present moment, there is no mechanism for granting agencies to hear from the communities involved in the projects. When the researcher goes to the communities, s/he often gets strong approval for what s/he does, including confirmation of the usefulness for and relevance to the needs and the projects of the community. This approval, however, cannot be transmitted directly to the SSHRC. Nor can evaluators be non-academic experts at the present time. Thus we find a serious contradiction: although the tricouncil in charge of ethical protocols in Canada states that science must be useful and beneficial for the communities whose culture is the object of the research to be carried out, none of its granting agencies have a protocol to hear from these people. The other side of this coin is that when communities finally get some money to spend on projects, many of them prefer to invest the money and the effort in their own community, which is completely understandable. The end result, however, is that the scientific linguistic community is losing its voice and relevance in indigenous communities. Even more sadly, the common objective – language maintenance, preservation and encouragement – becomes more and more threatened.

Facing this difficult situation, the only reasonable solution would be that we who are involved in such affairs collectively request from the SSHRC a separate committee on endangered language scholarship and that we come together in finding a balance between scientific objectives and ethical responsibility. This way the problematics of oppression, hegemony

and self-determination unique to the arena of the study of endangered languages will be engaged and addressed. This will also be a way for us, as a community of scholars, to engage in collaborative programmes of critical language awareness with the community who are our partners in that research.

3. Other difficult questions, more specific to the Migmaq situation

In this section, we critically address two difficult questions specific to the Migmaq community. First we discuss the problem of multiple writing systems and how this affects the creation of an encyclopædic dictionary. Second, we discuss dialectal variation and problems related to how it might be represented in an encyclopædic dictionary.

3.1 Issues surrounding writing systems

In the Migmaq world, the question of uniformization and standardization of the numerous writing systems remains unanswered. Although one can count more than a dozen different systems in the extensive written Migmaq corpus, at the present time four different ones are in use. In this subsection we will critically review the four systems and then suggest a solution.

3.1.1 The Smith-Francis system

The Smith-Francis system is in use in Nova Scotia and especially in Cape Breton. It was created and promoted when the Migmaq communities had not yet realized that the language maintenance was at risk. This system is phonological, obliging the user to know the language to be able to pronounce written words correctly. For example, a morphemic boundary inside a word triggers a morphophonological rule which influences the voicing of unvoiced consonants. As it is difficult for a non-speaker (a learner) to recognize morphemic boundaries, the learner cannot guess the correct pronunciation from the orthography. This is a problem in a situation where fewer and fewer native speakers are available as models for the learners during the critical period of language acquisition. Another problem with the Smith-Francis system is the use of an apostrophe to indicate vowel length. In the context of electronic archiving and publishing, problems arise, because in certain computer operating systems and database programs (especially older ones), the apostrophe is a reserved character.

This results either in the word not being recognized or it results in the program interpreting the apostrophe as marking a word boundary. All of this having been said, a fair amount of published literature and teaching materials have been produced in the Smith-Francis writing system over the past twenty years. There is also a general and stable community consensus over it. It is thus predictable that, in the event of a reopening of a pan-Migmaq discussion about uniformization, it seems very likely that the Migmaq of Cape Breton would be reluctant to accept any change to their already well-established writing system.

3.1.2 *The Pacifique-Millea system*

In New Brunswick, the official writing system is the Pacifique-Millea. In the eighties when the last pan-Migmaq discussion occurred, New Brunswick came very close to joining Nova Scotia and adopting the Smith-Francis writing system. For community-internal reasons, a decision was made to keep the old Pacifique orthography. Mrs. Mildred Millea, a leading language activist at the time, modified the Pacifique writing system by introducing double vowels to mark vowel lengths. Since then, publications by the New Brunswick government have been written in that system, although some southern communities are said to have started to ‘unofficially’ use the Smith-Francis system in curriculum development. The northern communities (Babineau and Eel River Bar) generally make use of the Watson Williams system (cf. section 3.1.3) for the same purposes. These tendencies in writing system affiliations are interesting in that they reflect more the ancient Migmaq Seven Districts division than contemporary provincial borders.

3.1.3 *The Watson Williams writing system*

In Quebec, the official writing system is the Watson Williams one. It is used in Listuguj and to some extent in Gesgapegiag, although the spelling Gesgapegiag itself (i.e. a ‘g’ instead of a ‘q’ at the end of the word) reflects a divergence from the Watson Williams system. Beside unpublished teaching materials, a few published leaflets and booklets, the most important piece of work that has been published in the Watson Williams writing system is the *Gelulg Glusuaqan*, a Migmaq translation of the New Testament by Watson Williams and people from Listuguj. The on-line Migmaq talking dictionary is also written in a marginally variant version of the Watson Williams writing system (Mitchell 2002).

3.1.4 *The DeBlois writing system*

A fourth writing system is used by Albert D. DeBlois in his *Micmac Lexicon* (1994) and his *Micmac Dictionary* (1996). This system is a modified version of the Pacifique system where vowel length is marked with diacritics, which brings on much the same technical problems as those discussed in section 3.1.2 for the apostrophe.

3.1.5 *The Metallic writing system*

Recently one of the most active and prolific Migmaq scholars, Mr. Emmanuel N. Metallic, designed a new phonetically-based writing system. This system is meant to be easy to read for non-speakers as well as for speakers, and to facilitate an accurate pronunciation of the morphophonological phenomena. Mr. Metallic is one of the co-authors of the *Electronic Encyclopedic Dictionary of Contemporary Migmaq* (EEDCM) (Cyr, Metallic and Sévigny forthcoming) and has insisted on using his writing system for the 13 500 lexical entries. When faced with this choice, we asked ourselves whether this would mean more complexity in an already complex situation. However, as we gained more experience working with the Metallic system, and as we consulted an ever-growing range of native and non-native speakers, educators, policy makers and writers, we grew excited at the serendipity of our choice. Our experience when showing the dictionary to a large selection of Migmaq teachers and writers at the *St. Francis Xavier/Antigonish L'nuisultnej* conference in 1999 made it clear to us that the participants found it much easier to read than any other system in existence and that they saw no problem in transposing the words into their own local writing system whenever appropriate. The participants also agreed with our explanation that writing the dictionary in a writing system external to all communities was a way of avoiding favouring one community writing system over another. This led us to believe that the Metallic writing system can become a sort of *scripta franca*, a writing system that is easy to read, to pronounce and to convert into local orthographies. Thus convinced, we agreed to use his system as long as the question of uniformization remains open.⁹ Our position was explained clearly on several occasions to persons in positions of authority in various communities in the three provinces: as long as there is no consensus around uniformization, there may appear as many new writing systems as there are scholars who wish to invent them. Taking this stance indicated, from a critical point of view, that to problematize the writing system issue as a part of a program of critical language awareness and to attempt to reinitiate a

dialog about it among the communities is to take a significant step towards finding a resolution for this hurtful problem.

3.2 Dialectal variation

In this section we discuss dialectal variation and the sorts of challenges it brings to the table in the creation of an encyclopaedic dictionary. Dialect variation in the Migmaq speech communities is not much different from that in other indigenous speech communities. We briefly discuss phonetic and lexical variation.

Variation manifests itself most evidently at the phonetic level. Some communities display more archaic/classical tendencies, such as in Gesgapegiag in Québec and Burnt Church in New Brunswick. Archaic or classical, in our view as well as in the view of native speakers, means that vowels and syllabic structures reflect more closely 19th and early 20th century usage. Speakers of other varieties comment on this variety as ‘older Migmaq’ or ‘past generations Migmaq.’ Other communities display more advanced phonetic features, eg. Listuguj or Big Cove. By advanced we mean that the language shows a more advanced phonetic and syllabic erosion. More vowels have centralized as schwas or have totally disappeared, leaving traces of morphophonemic phenomena (e.g. previously intervocalic voiced consonants remaining voiced even in a new devoicing syllable context). This type of Migmaq is occasionally referred to as ‘childish Migmaq,’ which seems to mean that the users of this more advanced variety sound, to the ear of speakers of the more classical variety, like children or teens when they speak.

There is also a considerable amount of lexical variation. On the one hand, this variation reflects universal tendencies in grammaticalization. On the other hand, however, a new type of variation most certainly reflects the political split imposed on the Migmaq as a people since the colonial era. Indeed, it is our hypothesis that, before the Cession, First Nations were free to travel across their vast territories and to organize social gatherings of significant magnitude such as pow-wows and other gatherings. These most probably had, among other things, a linguistic uniformization function. What we mean by this is that, on these occasions, people had the opportunity to compare the neologisms locally created over the year to convey new concepts, artifacts or realities. The pan-Migmaq gatherings probably functioned as a sort of ‘language academy’ or a ‘terminology

center.’ After 1831, when the first system of Indian reserves was established, such gathering opportunities disappeared, leaving each community more or less isolated in terms of global organization and consensus. In the early seventies, following the Indian Red Book, the federal government devolved education matters to each reserve independently, the situation became even more isolating, to the point where it can be judged as ‘isolationist.’ Indeed until very recently, communities opted for reserve-bound educational decisions and the idea of common school boards was unheard of.

As a consequence, lexical variation has most probably increased significantly through the past century. A symptom of this is the fact that when one visits schools in Migmaq communities, one finds that simple terms such as ladies rooms/men rooms are referred to with almost as many different terms as there are communities. Another symptom is that, since the reinstatement of pow wows, where people from the whole Migmaq country come and gather, many individuals acknowledge that when they talk with people from other communities, they prefer to speak English, even when both parties are fluent speakers of Migmaq. This is largely because they don't want to be laughed at, given the divergence in their way of speaking. It is also common for people from one community to either marvel at or mock the neologisms created in other communities.

3.2.1 Dialectal variation and dictionary construction

In the context of the making of a dictionary one cannot deny the necessity of taking variation into account. However, although it seems ideal to include all the local or regional varieties in each entry and/or article of the dictionary, other approaches might be envisioned, particularly in the context of urgent language planning and language teaching. On the one hand, including all variation (morphosyntactic, lexical and/or phonetic) in the dictionary, although perhaps important, is a costly enterprise. This has not been possible during the making of the first version of our dictionary, because our funding was insufficient to organize networks of consultants on every relevant site, a basic condition for the achievement of such an objective. On the other hand, given our previous discussion in this paper, it seems necessary to propose an approach that will be profitable for language planners and curriculum material developers. Pursuant to this, there is a fair consensus toward the more archaic/classical variety as the ‘best’ one, regardless of whatever variety of Migmaq is used by different speakers whom you might consult. In fact, both southern and northern

speakers (South of the Miramichi and North of the Miramichi) agree that the most beautiful Migmaq variety is that of Burnt Church, a variety of Migmaq which exemplifies classical Migmaq. In fact, beyond mere eloquence, when it comes to lexical/morphological judgments, one reason for granting a speaker the status of 'very good speaker' always has to do with the fact that the speaker demonstrates an ability to speak with features belonging to the past or older generation. In the perspective that our dictionary will be abundantly used as a reference tool for the development of curricular material, it seems to us equally necessary to include in the dictionary a classical content. This classical content can be extracted from previous dictionaries, such as Rand (1888), and from written documents from the past century, i.e. the Micmac Messenger, epistolary correspondence, recorded speech, and other written and printed documents.

Our intention in doing so is to propose a language model which, although not the most current at the present time, is one which is given the status of being the best and most prestigious variety. We think that if there is a chance to achieve a linguistic and socio-political consensus to adopt a common variety for the purpose of language planning and development, it would be around the adoption of this more classical variety. It would become a transregional/transdialectal *lingua franca* which would be taught in schools and be the locus for a pan dialectal regulating organism. Again, we reinforce the notion that this can not be achieved without the creation of such a language model being accompanied by or even being part of a programme of critical language awareness. Creating awareness of the values and ideologies underlying the adherence to or use of different dialects will avoid the possibility that the Migmaq speech communities continue to parcel out the language in groups of variants, each of which will have relatively little status in the face of English and will fall into complete disuse in the long run. The compromise inherent to the development of a standard, while preserving variation in a digital archive (in an expanded multi-modal, on-line version of the EEDCM) represents a cost-effective and ideologically-sound idea (Sévigny forthcoming). This preserves the indigenous language and quickly transfers stewardship of the linguistic and cultural archive to the Migmaq, thus encouraging self-determination and linguistic and cultural reappropriation.

4. *Conclusion*

We have critically discussed several issues relating to the creation of an encyclopaedic dictionary for the Migmaq language. We reviewed the concepts of 'relevance' and 'usefulness' and demonstrated how their definitions can vary depending on who is using them. In our particular case we discussed the importance of the three main protagonists in any play involving indigenous research: academics, granting agencies and the indigenous communities themselves. We showed that these groups do not agree on what is to be considered relevant and useful, and that there is not even the possibility of a proper discussion between the three groups, given that there exists no forum in which to conduct such a discussion. In section three we discussed two (among several) important problems one must face when one wishes to construct an encyclopaedic dictionary for Migmaq: choosing a writing system and representing dialectal variation. We showed that both issues are very politically charged and will only be resolved through discussion and the beginning of a concerted programme of critical language awareness. Finally, we briefly mentioned the idea of creating a digital linguistic and cultural archive of the Migmaq language that would constitute a step towards language preservation as well as a tool for critical language awareness. There remain many issues to be discussed and many problems to be resolved, but we think that with a concerted effort and practical thinking on the part of the three groups we talked about in section 2, the Migmaq language can not only be preserved, but thrive.

Notes

1. This will be true until indigenous communities acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for the construction of their own linguistics and pedagogical resources.
2. The two decade estimation is based upon a linguist with minimal resources (which is often the case in Canada, given funding trends in the humanities and social sciences). It should be noted that for such a dictionary to be useful, it would also have to address the idea of encyclopaedic knowledge. This, in and of itself, is very time-consuming, given traditional, non-electronic research methods.

3. A good example of this is the work of Father Pacifique who produced thousands of pages of edited literary Migmaq in the *Setanoei/Micmac Messenger*. Other works by missionaries and teachers that have been preserved exist, but are often scorned by linguists as representing non-natural language corpora. The problem is that when there are fewer and fewer speakers of a native language, and the language is fragmenting into dialectal variants heavily influenced by contact with English, sometimes the return to a literary standard is the best means of *solidifying the language's status in the community and resurrecting it*. Examples of this sort of language resuscitation are Hebrew and Irish.
4. This is often because she speaks a more archaic/classical variety of Migmaq, thus our intuition about using written corpus for examples.
5. On the question of naturalness of data/corpora in the case of languages that have not yet undergone internal language planning we refer the audience to the archives of the FUNKNET listserv where there was an excellent, extensive discussion on this topic in 1996.
6. They are at least subject to the political party in power's *perception of value* of the research that they are supporting. In the current neo-conservative climate, we have seen a shift towards the 'practical' and the 'applicable' for example (notwithstanding a lack of any sort of authoritative definition of these concepts).
7. We would not refer to this kind of situation if we had not heard such opinions from the mouths of people sitting on SSHRC juries.
8. Although anyone who has participated in a project of indigenous lexicography knows that there are many theoretical and technical difficulties that have not even been problematized, given the novelty of the field.
9. The fact remains that it is also relatively easy to write a macro that will convert any writing system into another in a digital medium.

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Grammaticalisation et perte des marques d'accord sujet-verbe en français acadien du Nord-Est

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1. Introduction

Au cours de leur évolution, la plupart des langues indo-européennes ont connu une simplification importante de leur système d'inflexions. Parmi ces langues, le français est certainement l'une de celles dont l'évolution vers une structure plus analytique a été des plus remarquables. Néanmoins, le français moderne conserve encore des traces d'un riche système d'inflexions, surtout au niveau du verbe.

L'évolution d'une langue vers une structure plus analytique est un processus de nature cyclique (Givón 1976, 1979; Harris 1978; Lehmann 1985; Posner 1997, par exemple). C'est-à-dire qu'alors même que certaines flexions disparaissent, d'autres éléments qui ont plus ou moins la même fonction sont en voie de grammaticalisation. À leur tour, ces éléments grammaticalisés seront peut-être sujets à une perte de fonction et à une restructuration dans une étape ultérieure de développement.

Ce mouvement de balancier est évident dans l'évolution de l'accord sujet-verbe en français. En latin et en ancien français, l'accord sujet-verbe était marqué par un système de flexions postverbales des plus complets qui rendaient l'emploi des clitiques sujets optionnel. En français parlé moderne, cet accord est presque uniquement du domaine des marqueurs de sujet, qui pour la plupart sont devenus obligatoires, alors que les flexions postverbales ont à toute fin pratique disparues. Si on en juge à partir de certains travaux récents portant sur des variétés de français parlé (Lambrecht 1981, 1986, Ossipov 1990, Roberge 1990, Auger 1994, 1995, 1998, Beaulieu et Balcom 1998, Fonseca-Greber 2000, Nadasdi 2000, par exemple), les marqueurs de sujet sont même souvent analysés comme des flexions préverbaux d'accord sujet-verbe, c'est-à-dire des éléments grammaticalisés. Quant aux flexions postverbales d'accord sujet-verbe, dans la plupart des variétés de français parlé, il ne reste plus que la flexion *-ez* de deuxième personne du pluriel (*vous parlez*), puisque la première personne du pluriel qui porte la flexion postverbale *-ons*, (*nous parlons*) a laissé la place à la troisième personne du singulier (*on parle*) qui elle n'a pas de flexion postverbale.¹

La grammaticalisation des marqueurs de sujet est le plus souvent traitée comme un changement linguistique en cours (Bally 1965, Ashby 1977, Harris 1978, par exemple). Plusieurs études portant sur le français parlé (Lambrecht 1981, 1986 Auger 1994, 1998, Papin et Rottet 1997, Fonseca-Greber 2000, Nadasdi 2000, Beaulieu, Cichocki et Balcom 2001, par exemple) montrent en effet que le degré de grammaticalisation des divers marqueurs de sujet et le niveau de perte des flexions postverbales varient selon les personnes grammaticales et qu'il s'agit là de processus contraints par une diversité de facteurs linguistiques et extralinguistiques.

Cet article présente une étude exploratoire de la variation dans les flexions verbales d'accord sujet-verbe dans une variété de français acadien parlé dans le nord-est du Nouveau-Brunswick, Canada (dorénavant FANENB). Plus spécifiquement, il s'agit d'une analyse des tendances dans la grammaticalisation du marqueur de sujet /i/ (dorénavant *i-*) à la troisième personne du pluriel (dorénavant 3pl) et dans la perte ou le maintien de la flexion postverbale traditionnelle 3pl *-ont*. La variation présente dans l'emploi de ces flexions est étudiée dans quelques contextes linguistiques et d'après certains facteurs extralinguistiques, plus particulièrement l'âge, le sexe et le réseau social.

Dans la première partie de cet article, nous présenterons les formes que prend l'accord sujet-verbe 3pl en FANENB et nous dégagerons les variantes qui serviront à cerner les tendances dans le degré de grammaticalisation et de perte ou de maintien des flexions pré- et postverbales. Nous examinerons ensuite ces processus dans les contextes linguistiques et extralinguistiques retenus.

2. L'accord sujet-verbe 3pl en français acadien du nord-est

En FANENB, la troisième personne du pluriel est un terrain des plus fertiles pour analyser les processus de grammaticalisation, de perte et de maintien des flexions verbales.

D'abord, on sait que peu importe la variété, la troisième personne est un environnement moins favorable à la présence des marqueurs de sujet que la première et la deuxième personne ce qui entraîne un emploi non catégorique des formes, c'est-à-dire de la variation. Givón (1979) explique cette différence entre les trois personnes en invoquant le plus haut degré d'implication – en tant que participants – de la première et de la deuxième personne versus la troisième et la présence possible d'un sujet lexical à la troisième personne qui rend l'emploi du marqueur de sujet superflu pour les

fins de la communication. En conséquence, alors que les marqueurs de sujet *je* et *nous* de la première personne et *tu* et *vous* de la deuxième personne sont à toute fin pratique obligatoires en FANENB comme en témoignent les exemples (1a) et (1b), ceux de troisième personne, peu importe leur genre et leur nombre, sont sujets à la variation tel qu'illustré en (1c), (1d) et (1e).

- (1) a. Moi j'mange pas de ça.
*Moi mange pas de ça.
- b. Toi t'es venu trop tard.
*Toi es venu trop tard.
- c. L'infirmière a vient demain.
L'infirmière vient demain.
Yelle a vient demain.
Yelle vient demain.
- d. Marc i part rarement à c'te heure-là.
Marc part rarement à c'te heure-là.
Lui i part rarement à c'te heure-là.
Lui part rarement à c'te heure-là.
- e. Les p'tites i parlent pas de lui.
Les p'tites parlent pas de lui.
Zeux i parlent pas de lui.
Zeux parlent pas de lui.

De plus, le FANENB a une flexion postverbale d'accord sujet-verbe 3pl qui présente aussi un niveau intéressant de variation. En effet – si la seule flexion postverbale d'accord sujet-verbe encore utilisée dans la plupart des variétés de français parlé, *-ez* à la deuxième personne du pluriel, est obligatoire en FANENB comme dans la plupart des autres variétés de français tel qu'exemplifié en (2a) – le FANENB a cependant une flexion post verbale 3pl traditionnelle *-ont/-iont* qui elle est sujette à la variation. Dans les paradigmes des verbes les plus communs – les verbes qui n'ont qu'un radical 3pl au présent (*aimer, finir, prendre, etc.*) – la flexion postverbale *-ont* alterne avec le suffixe *-ent*, un morphème zéro (\emptyset) tel que montré en (2b).

- (2) a. Vous fermez toujours c'te porte là?
*Vous ferm- \emptyset toujours c'te porte là?
- b. I ferment toujours c'te porte-là?
I ferment toujours c'te porte là?

Dans les paradigmes des verbes qui ont deux radicaux 3pl au présent de l'indicatif en FANENB (*aller, avoir, être, faire*), la forme verbale traditionnelle en *-ont* alterne avec une forme montrant un changement de radical (dorénavant forme à infixe) tel que montré en (3a) et (3b) ou avec deux formes: l'une montrant un changement de radical et l'autre un morphème zéro comme exemplifié en (3c) et (3d).

- | | | |
|--------|------------------------------|---------|
| (3) a. | i avont / i ont | (avoir) |
| b. | i étiont / i sont | (être) |
| c. | i allont / i vont / i allent | (aller) |
| d. | i font / i font / i font | (faire) |

Finalement, dans certaines constructions syntaxiques spécifiques, les verbes 3pl peuvent aussi porter un accord par défaut, c'est-à-dire un accord de troisième personne du singulier tel qu'illustré en (4).

- (4) a. Tous les enfants ça fait ça.
 b. Il y a ben des femmes qu'a déjà dit ça.

Notons que ce type d'accord se retrouve dans plusieurs variétés de français parlé, surtout dans les constructions relativisées (Bauche 1946, Frei 1929/1971, Flikeid et Péronnet 1989, King 1994, Mougeon et Beniak 1994, Beaulieu et Balcom 1998, parmi d'autres).

2.1. *Les données*

Les données utilisées dans cette analyse sont extraites d'un corpus sociolinguistique de langage spontané recueilli au début des années 90, auprès de 16 locuteurs et locutrices de français acadien provenant d'une petite ville de pêche, Shippagan, située dans le nord-est du Nouveau-Brunswick au Canada (voir Beaulieu 1995). Pour les fins de cette étude exploratoire, nous avons analysé 48 heures d'enregistrement: soit 24 heures en situation intra-groupe (tous les individus présents sont des locuteurs natifs de FANENB) et 24 heures en situation extra-groupe (au moins un des individus présents est un locuteur d'une autre variété de français). De ces 48 heures, nous avons extrait 4 663 occurrences de séquences verbales portant une marque d'accord 3pl ou qui d'après la référence ou la source de l'accord sujet-verbe sont des variantes 3pl.

2.2. Les variantes

Étant donné que la question qui nous intéresse est la grammaticalisation et la perte ou le maintien des flexions verbales, les formes 3pl ont été classifiées d'après les affixes d'accord sujet-verbe que porte le radical du verbe. Au moins 7 groupes de formes ont été relevés à partir des combinaisons possibles d'affixes. De ces groupes, cinq (dorénavant variantes 3pl) ont été retenus pour les fins de la présente analyse.

Les variantes qui ont été retenues sont présentées au tableau 1. Le premier groupe (\emptyset -V- \emptyset) rassemble les formes verbales qui à l'oral ne portent aucune flexion d'accord sujet-verbe. La deuxième variante (\emptyset -V^{infixe}) regroupe les verbes marqués uniquement par un changement de radical. Le troisième groupe de formes est la variante i-V- \emptyset qui décrit les combinaisons constituées d'un radical portant une flexion préverbale d'accord *i-* et un morphème zéro en position postverbale.

Les formes marquées par une flexion préverbale et un infixé constituent une quatrième variante i-V^{infixe} et celles qui portent une flexion préverbale et une flexion postverbale traditionnelle, une cinquième i-V-ont.

Quant aux formes qui n'ont pas été retenues, il s'agit d'abord de celles qui portent une flexion postverbale traditionnelle mais qui n'ont pas de flexion préverbale (\emptyset -V-ont) et ensuite de celles dont le marqueur de sujet est *ça*, *ce* et *c'*. Les formes du premier type (\emptyset -V-ont) ont été exclues de l'analyse puisqu'elles ne constituent pas à proprement parler une variante. Beaulieu et Balcom (1998:17) ont montré qu'en FANENB, la flexion postverbale *-ont* apparaît pratiquement toujours en cooccurrence avec la flexion préverbale *i-* et qu'étant donné le petit nombre de verbes portant la flexion postverbale *-ont* seule, ces formes doivent être interprétées comme des erreurs de performance. Dans le corpus analysé on trouve 14 occurrences de la flexion postverbale *-ont* sans *i-* préverbal sur un total de 693 formes ayant une flexion postverbale *-ont* ce qui représente environ 2% de ces formes et moins de 0, 3% de l'ensemble des données. Ces 14 occurrences ont donc été exclues des analyses. Nous avons aussi mis de côté, pour le moment, 114 occurrences de verbes dont la source de l'accord sujet-verbe est une forme 3pl mais dont le radical est précédé de l'un des clitiques sujets *ça*, *ce* et *c'* comme dans l'exemple en (4a). Il va sans dire que ces formes exigent une analyse indépendante puisqu'elles présentent des caractéristiques différentes de celles discutées dans la présente étude. Ces formes feront l'objet d'une étude ultérieure.

Tableau 1: Variantes 3pl en FANENB

Variante	Fréquence N = 4 535	Exemples
∅-V-∅	1 131	Les plus vieux <i>faisent</i> ça.
∅-V ^{infixe}	900	Les plus vieux <i>font</i> ça. Les plus vieux <i>fait</i> ça.
i-V-∅	900	Les plus vieux <i>i</i> <i>faisent</i> ça.
i-V ^{infixe}	925	Les plus vieux <i>i</i> <i>font</i> ça. Les plus vieux <i>i</i> <i>fait</i> ça
i-V-ont	679	Les plus vieux <i>i</i> <i>faisent</i> ça.

3. Les contextes linguistiques et extralinguistiques

D'après certaines études portant sur des variétés de français parlé (Auger 1998, Fonseca-Greber 2000, Nadasdi 2000, Beaulieu, Cichocki et Balcom 2001, parmi d'autres), plusieurs facteurs sont en mesure de contribuer à l'explication de la variation des marqueurs de sujet et des flexions postverbales d'accord sujet-verbe. Les données du présent corpus ont donc été encodées pour une vingtaine de contextes linguistiques et cinq facteurs extralinguistiques.

3.1. Les contextes linguistiques

Les contextes linguistiques d'intérêt définissent un ensemble de caractéristiques qui portent sur le verbe lui-même et les aspects phonologiques, sémantiques, morphologiques et syntaxiques de l'environnement dans lequel il apparaît. Cependant, il ne serait pas particulièrement intéressant, ni même faisable, d'inclure tous ces contextes dans une analyse multivariée des 4 535 occurrences retenues. En effet, l'ensemble du corpus 3pl ne constitue pas à proprement parler une variable puisque tous les contextes linguistiques ne sont pas nécessairement pertinents à chacune des occurrences 3pl et que de plus, certains contextes déclenchent l'emploi de sous-groupes spécifiques de formes ou variantes. Si on veut parvenir à définir de façon exhaustive la variation présente dans ce corpus, il est nécessaire d'effectuer des analyses à partir de sous-groupes d'occurrences qui elles constituent des variables dans un sens plus strict du

terme. En d'autres mots, des groupes délimités de formes qui apparaissent dans des contextes linguistiques comparables, sinon équivalents.

La première étape dans l'étude des processus de grammaticalisation et de perte ou de maintien des flexions d'accord sujet-verbe est donc une analyse exploratoire qui permet d'examiner de façon assez générale la présence et l'absence des flexions *i-* et *-ont* dans les contextes linguistiques et extralinguistiques et de déterminer les contextes et possiblement les regroupements de contextes qui constituent des variables.

Dans la suite de cet article, nous examinons donc cette question de façon assez globale, c'est-à-dire dans les quelques contextes linguistiques qui sont pertinents à l'ensemble du corpus 3pl. Ces contextes sont présentés au tableau 2.

Le premier contexte linguistique pertinent à l'ensemble des données est le temps et le mode du verbe. Dans la présente étude ce contexte a trois niveaux: l'indicatif présent, l'imparfait et le conditionnel présent. La question que nous voulons examiner par rapport à ce contexte est l'effet du présent de l'indicatif versus l'effet de l'imparfait et du conditionnel sur l'emploi des marqueurs *i-* et *-ont*. Étant donné que l'on peut considérer le temps présent comme le temps non marqué (Klausenburger 2000) et qu'en l'absence de contraintes plus fondamentales, on s'attend à ce la diffusion des innovations linguistiques se fasse plus rapidement dans les éléments de la langue qui sont non marqués, le temps présent devrait être plus favorable à la présence du marqueur *i-*. En ce qui a trait à la terminaison postverbale *-ont*, si le processus en jeu est la maitien de cette flexion, la fréquence de *-ont* devrait aussi être plus élevée avec le présent, ou au contraire, moins élevée si le changement en cours est la perte de cette flexion.

Le nombre du suffixe ou de l'infixe que porte le verbe est un autre contexte qui peut être étudié pour l'ensemble du corpus. Les niveaux de ce contexte distinguent les affixes qui à l'oral sont pluriels (*aimont, perdent, finissent, font, etc.*), de ceux qui sont singuliers (*a, perd, finit, fait, etc.*) ou ambiguës (*aiment, parlent, etc.*). La question pertinente en ce qui a trait à ces affixes est l'influence qu'ils exercent sur la présence du marqueur préverbal *i-*. En effet, si la flexion postverbale *-ont* requiert la présence de *i-* et que ce marqueur mixte représente un stade entre le marquage postverbal et le marquage préverbal (Beaulieu et Balcom 1998:21), on peut s'attendre à ce que les infixes pluriels montrent une tendance semblable à celle de la flexions postverbale *-ont*. C'est-à-dire que les verbes qui portent une terminaison ou un infixe pluriel auront tendance à apparaître plus

souvent avec le marqueur préverbal *i-* que les verbes dont les affixes sont singuliers ou ambiguës.

Tableau 2: Contextes linguistiques pertinents à l'ensemble du corpus

Contexte	Valeurs	Exemples
<i>Temps du verbe</i>	indicatif présent imparfait conditionnel	(i) aiment / (i) font (i) aimaient / i aimions (i) aimeraient / i aimerions
<i>Nombre de l'affixe postverbal ou de l'infixe</i>	pluriel ambiguë singulier	i aimons / (i) font / (i) prennent (i) aiment (i) est / (i) prend
<i>Élément dans la position syntaxique du sujet</i>	item lexical pro pro-arbitraire trace Qu	oui, les enfants (i) aiment ça oui, [pro] (i) aiment ça par icitte, [pro-arbitraire] (i) font ça, le printemps c'est les hommes qu' [trace Qu] ont ça

Finalement, un troisième contexte qu'il est possible d'inclure dans une étude préliminaire des données est la nature de l'élément qui occupe la position syntaxique du sujet dans la phrase dans laquelle apparaît la forme 3pl. On sait que toute proposition a une position structurale pour le sujet mais que la nature de l'élément qui l'occupe et les propriétés de cette position varient (Roberge 1990). Dans certains types de phrase, la position syntaxique du sujet est remplie par un sujet lexical réalisé tel *les enfants* en (5a). Dans d'autres propositions, cette position est occupée par un sujet non réalisé ou un sujet nul.

- (5) a. Les enfants (i) aiment ça.
 b. Les enfants i aiment tu ça ? Oui, [pro] i aiment ça.
 c. Par icitte, la pêche au homard [pro-arbitraire] i font ça seulement le printemps.
 d. C'est les hommes qu' [trace Qu] ont ça.

Ce sujet non réalisé est parfois 'pro'; c'est-à-dire, un sujet nul qui a une source ou une référence ailleurs dans le discours (Roberge 1990), tel

qu'exemplifié en (5b). Dans certaines phrases, *pro* n'a pas de source ou de référent dans le discours, il s'agit d'un *pro* indéfini que Jaeggli (1986) et Zribi-Hertz (1996:230) appellent 'pro-arbitraire.' Ce type de phrase est illustré en (5c). Finalement, dans d'autres constructions telles que les relatives sujets, les clivées, les pseudo clivées et diverses structures relativisées qu'on pourrait regrouper sous l'étiquette 'structures à présentatif' (voir Lambrecht 1981), la source ou la référence de l'accord sujet-verbe est un élément relativisé qui occupe une position à l'extérieur de la proposition et la trace *Qu* de cet élément occupe la position syntaxique du sujet tel qu'illustré en (5d). Étant donné d'une part que *pro* se doit d'être récupérable, que ce soit par la morphologie verbale, par les items lexicaux ou les deux (Roberge 1990) et que d'autre part, un sujet lexical réalisé rend la présence d'un marqueur de sujet superflu quand il s'agit de préciser la source ou la référence (Givón 1979, Fonseca-Greber 2000), on s'attend à ce que *pro*-arbitraire et *pro* dans la position syntaxique du sujet soient des environnements beaucoup plus favorables à la présence de *i-* que ne l'est un item lexical dans cette position.

3.2. *Les contextes extralinguistiques*

Trois contextes extralinguistiques ont été retenus: le sexe, l'âge et le réseau social des locuteurs. Chacun de ces contextes a au moins deux niveaux: femme et homme (le sexe), jeunes adultes – 20 à 32 ans et adultes plus âgés – 38 à 54 ans (l'âge) et réseau ouvert et réseau fermé (le réseau social). Pour ce dernier facteur, un réseau social fermé signifie que les liens sociaux des individus se limitent aux membres de la famille, aux collègues de travail, aux amis et aux voisins; alors que le terme réseau ouvert s'applique à un informateur qui a en plus de ses liens avec les proches, des contacts dans différents groupes professionnels et sociaux dans la communauté ou à l'extérieur de la communauté.

Les croisements entre réseau social, sexe et âge ont aussi été considérés. Cette approche est motivée par des résultats comme ceux de Milroy (1980) dans ses recherches à Belfast qui note des interactions entre sexe et réseau, et ceux de Labov (2001:329-334) qui, en utilisant une méthode statistique différente pour analyser les mêmes données que Milroy, fait ressortir une interaction entre le réseau et les différents quartiers de Belfast. Quant au réseau social dans nos données de français acadien, on sait que les individus du réseau fermé utilisent les formes liées aux normes de la communauté plus que les individus qui ont un réseau ouvert (Beaulieu 1995, par exemple), ce qui suggère que la forme *i-V-ont*, une forme acadienne traditionnelle, devrait être plus fréquente dans la performance des locuteur qui ont un réseau fermé.

4. La variation

Regardons d'abord la distribution générale des formes pour l'ensemble du corpus selon les types de verbe, c'est-à-dire le nombre de radical 3pl du verbe au présent. Ces données sont présentées au tableau 3.

Tableau 3: Distribution des formes dans le corpus d'après les deux types de verbe

Type de Verbe	\emptyset -V- \emptyset	\emptyset -V ^{infixe}	i-V- \emptyset	i-V ^{infixe}	i-V-ont
<i>TYPE I</i> (<i>aimer, finir, etc.</i>)	37,4%	1,8%	38,1%	0,6%	19,1%
	39,8%		38,7%		19,1%
<i>TYPE II</i> (<i>avoir, aller, être, faire</i>)	14,8%	31,8%	5,8%	33,7%	11,3%
	46,6%		39,5%		11,3%

La distribution présentée au tableau 3 montre que les fréquences d'emploi des formes varient considérablement selon les types de verbe. Par exemple, quand les verbes qui n'ont qu'un seul radical 3pl au présent, tels *aimer, finir, prendre, etc.* (dorénavant verbes de Type I), portent un ou des affixes d'accord sujet-verbe, il s'agit d'affixes pré- et postverbaux (i-V- \emptyset = 38,1%; i-V-ont = 19,1%) car ce type de verbe n'a pas de deuxième radical 3pl. Pour ce groupe de verbes, les pourcentages de formes à infixes (\emptyset -V^{infixe} = 1,8%; i-V^{infixe} = 0,6%) montrés au tableau 3 n'incluent que des formes dont le radical est singulier comme par exemple, *finit, part, etc.* Au contraire, les verbes qui ont plus d'un radical 3pl au présent (dorénavant verbes de Type II), sont le plus souvent employés avec le radical irrégulier 3pl (\emptyset -V^{infixe} = 31,8%; i-V^{infixe} = 33,7%). Les formes portant un marqueur préverbal seul ou un marquage mixte (marqueur préverbal *i-* et marqueur postverbal *-ont*) sont beaucoup moins fréquentes (i-V- \emptyset = 5,8%; i-V-ont = 11,3%) pour cette catégorie de verbes.

En ce qui a trait à la fréquence de la flexion préverbale *i-*, on constate que 57,8% des verbes de Type I (38,7% + 19,1%) portent une flexion préverbale, alors que 39,8% sont des variantes sans flexion préverbale.

Pour les verbes de Type II, les variantes avec flexion préverbale représentent 50,8% des données (39,5% + 11,3%) et les variantes sans flexion préverbale 46,6% des données. D'après les fréquences montrées au tableau 3, la différence entre les verbes de Type I et les verbes de Type II en ce qui a trait à la présence du marqueur préverbal soit 7% semble en partie attribuable à l'emploi plus fréquent de la variante traditionnelle *i-V-ont* avec les verbes de Type I (19,1% comparé à 11,3% pour les verbes de Type II).

En somme, la présence de la flexion préverbale *i-* est un phénomène relativement commun puisque peu importe le type de verbe et la nature des autres affixes (*-ent*, *-ont*, infixe (radical irrégulier)) que porte le verbe, cette flexion peut être présente et tous les verbes confondus, plus de la moitié des occurrences 3pl portent cette flexion.

Quant à la flexion postverbale *-ont*, on note que 19,1% des verbes de Type I portent cette flexion, alors que 75,5% (37,4% + 38,1%) ont une flexion *-ent* (\emptyset) et que 2,4% (1,8% + 0,6%) sont des formes avec des radicaux singuliers. Quant aux verbes de Type II, qui en plus des flexions *-ont* et \emptyset postverbales, ont une forme à infixe 3pl, 11,3% d'entre eux portent une flexion postverbale *-ont*; 20,6% (14,8% + 5,8%) une flexion \emptyset et 65,5% (31,8% + 33,7%) sont des formes avec un radical irrégulier 3pl.

C'est donc dire que la flexion postverbale *-ont* a une fréquence assez limitée (en moyenne 15% du temps) et qu'elle est beaucoup moins utilisée que ses contreparties, la flexion *-ent* (48%) et les formes à infixe (32%). De plus, soulignons encore une fois que cette flexion traditionnelle fait partie d'une forme mixte qui exige la présence de la flexion préverbale *i-* comme c'est le cas pour l'autre flexion postverbale du FANENB *-ez* à la deuxième personne du pluriel qui est elle aussi toujours accompagnée du marqueur de sujet *vous*.

4.1. Les flexions verbales et les contextes linguistiques

Regardons maintenant les fréquences des flexions *i-* et *-ont* dans les différents contextes linguistiques.

4.1.1. La grammaticalisation de *i-* préverbal

En ce qui a trait à la fréquence de *i-*, on constate d'après les résultats au tableau 4 que pour les deux types de verbe, les contextes qui semblent les plus favorables à la présence de la flexion préverbale *i-* sont, parmi les temps de verbe, le temps présent; parmi les différents affixes de nombre, les

affixes pluriels; et parmi les éléments dans la position syntaxique du sujet, la présence de *pro*-arbitraire dans cette position.

Le premier résultat, c'est-à-dire l'emploi plus fréquent de *i-* avec les verbes portant des marqueurs de temps présent (61,2% et 56,9% versus 48,4% et 33,8% pour l'imparfait et 48,6% et 52,8% pour le conditionnel présent), suggère qu'en l'absence de contraintes plus fondamentales, le temps présent qui est un temps non marqué dont la fréquence d'emploi est élevée (75,5% des verbes du corpus) est un contexte plus propice à la diffusion d'un changement linguistique. Cependant, on constate que pour les verbes de Type II, la différence entre les fréquences de *i-* au présent (56,9%) et au conditionnel (52,3%) n'est pas très importante. Ceci suggère que d'autres contraintes sont aussi en jeu. Nous en reparlerons un peu plus loin dans cet article.

Le deuxième résultat, relatif au nombre de la flexion postverbale ou de l'infixe que porte le verbe, montre que dans l'ensemble, les affixes qui sont clairement pluriels, c'est-à-dire *-ont* et les radicaux pluriels, favorisent la présence du marqueur de sujet *i-*; 81,5% du temps pour les verbes de Type I et 62,7% pour les verbes de Type II. De toute évidence, les pourcentages relatifs à la flexion plurielle *-ont* qui n'apparaît jamais sans le marqueur préverbal *i-* rend compte d'une partie de ces résultats. Cependant, étant donné les taux de fréquence élevés de *i-* avec les radicaux pluriels, on peut se demander si toutes les formes qui portent deux flexions 3pl sont en voie de devenir des formes mixtes, c'est-à-dire des formes dans lesquelles la présence du marqueur *i-* est obligatoire si un autre affixe pluriel est présent. Les résultats relatifs aux facteurs extralinguistiques permettront de discuter un peu plus en détails de cette question.

Finalement, en ce qui a trait à l'effet de l'élément qui occupe la position syntaxique du sujet, on note qu'un *pro*-arbitraire est le contexte syntaxique le plus favorable à la présence de *i-* préverbal (96,7% et 93,7%). Ce contexte est suivi de *pro* avec référence (92,6% et 88%) et de l'item lexical (26,9% et 20,1%). C'est donc dire que *i-* est plus fréquent dans les contextes qui sont les moins précis au niveau de la communication: d'abord *pro*-arbitraire qui n'a aucune référence dans le discours, puis *pro*, qui a une référence dans le discours mais dont la position est éloignée par rapport au verbe et finalement, l'item lexical, le contexte dans lequel la référence précède immédiatement le verbe. En d'autres mots, la nécessité de récupérer les traits de *pro* et le besoin de préciser la source ou la référence pour les fins de la communication sont des éléments importants dans la présence de *i-*.

Tableau 4: Fréquences de *i-* préverbal dans les divers contextes linguistiques

Nature du Contexte	Valeurs	Type I Fréquence <i>I-</i> préverbal	Type II Fréquence <i>I-</i> préverbal	Fréquence du Contexte Dans Le Corpus
<i>Temps du verbe</i>	présent	61, 2%	56, 9%	75, 5%
	imparfait	48, 4%	33, 8%	22, 6%
	conditionnel	48, 6%	52, 3%	1, 7%
<i>Nombre de l'affixe post-verbal ou de l'infixe</i>	pluriel	81, 5%	62, 7%	59, 0%
	ambiguë	42, 3%	24, 0%	37, 5%
	singulier	8, 2%	0, 0%	3, 3%
<i>Élément dans la position syntaxique du sujet</i>	pro-	96, 7%	93, 7%	15, 0%
	arbitraire	92, 6%	88, 0%	39, 7%
	pro	26, 9%	20, 1%	19, 7%
	item	(94, 2%)	(90, 3%)	25, 2%
	lexical			
	trace de Qu			

Quant aux constructions relativisées qui ont une trace Qu dans la position syntaxique du sujet, les résultats relatifs à ce contexte diffèrent selon l'analyse syntaxique de /ki/ qui est privilégiée. Si [ki] ou [k] qui apparaît dans ces constructions est analysé comme un seul morphème, le pronom relatif *qui* tel qu'illustré dans les exemples en (6a) et en (6b), on doit convenir que tous les segments /i/ réalisés devant le radical du verbe appartiennent au pronom relatif et que les fréquences d'occurrence du marqueur de sujet *i-* dans ce contexte sont nulles.

- (6) a. Il y a des films qui [trace Qu] est intéressants.
 b. Il y a des affaires qu(i) [trace Qu] est méchantes.
 c. Il y a des films qu(e) [trace Qu] i-est intéressant.
 d. Il y a des affaires qu(e) [trace Qu] est méchantes.

Cependant, si /ki/ est analysé comme étant deux morphèmes, le complémenteur *que* et le marqueur de sujet *i-* (voir Auger 1994, Fonseca-

Greber 2000 et les études citées dans ces travaux pour des discussions détaillées de cette analyse), tel qu'illustré en (6c) et (6d), les fréquences de *i-* préverbal sont relativement élevées (94,2% et 90,3%) et une trace *Qu* dans la position syntaxique du sujet devient un contexte favorable à la présence de l'affixe préverbal. Étant donné que le choix entre l'une ou l'autre de ces analyses est une question qui dépasse largement le but de cet article, soulignons seulement que les résultats relatifs à l'analyse de /ki/ en tant que complémentateur et *i-* préverbal sont ceux qui seraient les plus cohérents avec les tendances mises à jour dans la présente étude.

4.1.2. *La perte ou le maintien de la flexion postverbale -ont*

Les fréquences de la flexion traditionnelle *-ont*, ou plutôt de la flexion mixte *i-* *-ont*, dans les divers contextes linguistiques suivent plus ou moins le modèle que nous venons de présenter pour la flexion préverbale bien que cela ne soit pas nécessairement évident d'après les résultats montrés au tableau 5.

D'abord, en ce qui a trait au temps du verbe, il semble que *-ont* soit plus fréquent au temps présent quand il s'agit des verbes de Type I et moins fréquent quand il s'agit des verbes de Type II; alors que le conditionnel semble être le contexte le plus favorable à *-ont* pour les verbes de Type II et le moins favorable pour les verbes de Type I. Si on regarde de plus près ces pourcentages, ils sont cohérents avec la suggestion que la diffusion d'un changement se fait plus facilement parmi les éléments non marqués.

En effet, pour les verbes de Type I, peu importe le temps du verbe, l'emploi d'une variante est presque exclusivement un choix entre l'une ou l'autre des flexions postverbales, *-ont* et *-ent* (94,6% des données). Le fait qu'un temps soit marqué ou non peut donc avoir une influence directe sur l'emploi de l'une ou l'autre de ces flexions. C'est pourquoi, le présent semble favoriser l'emploi de *-ont*.

Tableau 5: Fréquences de *i-ont* dans les divers contextes linguistiques

Nature du Contexte	Valeurs	Type I Fréquence <i>-Ont</i> Postverbal	Type II Fréquence <i>-Ont</i> Postverbal	Fréquence du Contexte Dans Le Corpus
<i>Temps du verbe</i>	présent	21, 7%	9, 4%	75, 5%
	imparfait	14, 3%	18, 8%	22, 6%
	conditionnel	5, 5%	21, 4%	1, 7%
<i>Élément dans la position syntaxique du sujet</i>	pro-arbitraire	47, 7%	27, 8%	15, 0%
	pro	25, 0%	17, 3%	39, 7%
	item	8, 5%	4, 6%	19, 7%
	lexical	1, 0%	0, 0%	25, 2%
	trace Qu			

Cependant, pour les verbes de Type II, au présent, les formes qui ont une flexion postverbale (*-ont, -ent*) sont peu fréquentes (31,9% des données) puisqu'elles sont en compétition avec les formes à infixes qui elles prévalent (74,5%). Au contraire, à l'imparfait et au conditionnel, les formes à flexion postverbale (*-ont, -ent*) représentent pratiquement 100% des données comme pour les verbes de Type I. C'est donc dire qu'au temps présent, un élément plus important que le temps du verbe – il s'agit bien sûr de la dominance des formes à radical irrégulier – affecte les fréquences de la flexion postverbale *-ont*.

Quant au contexte relatif à l'élément dans la position syntaxique du sujet, on note que *-ont* est plus fréquent dans les contextes dans lesquels *i-* est plus fréquent. Ce résultat n'est pas étonnant puisque *-ont* est toujours en cooccurrence avec *i-*. Soulignons cependant les fréquences très basses de *-ont* dans les constructions qui ont une trace Qu dans la position syntaxique du sujet. Ce résultat n'est pas surprenant non plus puisqu'en français informel, le verbe des constructions relativisées porte souvent un accord par défaut, soit un accord de troisième personne du singulier (Bauche 1946, Frei 1929/1971, Flikeid et Péronnet 1989, King 1994, Mougeon et Beniak 1994, Beaulieu et Balcom 1998, parmi d'autres).

En somme, parmi les contextes linguistiques, ceux dans lesquels la flexion préverbale *i-* et la flexion postverbale *-ont* montrent des fréquences plus élevées sont: le temps de verbe non marqué, la présence d'autres affixes pluriels et les contextes syntaxiques qui nécessitent la présence du marqueur de sujet afin de rendre le discours moins ambiguë. Étant donné, que *i-* et *-ont* constituent un marqueur mixte et que les contextes qui semblent favoriser la présence de *-ont* postverbal sont plus ou moins les mêmes que ceux qui favorisent la présence de *i-* préverbal, il semblerait approprié à partir des données analysées de parler du maintien de la flexion postverbale *-ont* et non de sa perte. Cette question sera discutée dans la section qui suit qui porte sur les contextes extralinguistiques.

4.2 *Les flexions verbales et les contextes extralinguistiques*

Afin d'étudier le rôle des trois facteurs extralinguistiques – le réseau social, le sexe et l'âge – les formes verbales ont été regroupées en trois variantes d'après les variétés de langue auxquelles elles sont associées. La première catégorie, \emptyset -V- \emptyset regroupe les formes qui ne portent ni la flexion *i-*, ni la flexion *-ont* tels les verbes *sont*, *finissent*, *travaillent*, etc. Il s'agit là de formes qui sont utilisées en français normatif. Le deuxième groupe, *i*-V- \emptyset rassemble les verbes qui ont une flexion préverbale *i-* mais qui ne portent pas la flexion postverbale *-ont* tels que *i-sont*, *i-finissent*, *i-travaillent*, etc. Comme nous l'avons déjà mentionné, ces formes se rencontrent dans diverses variétés de français parlé mais elles ne font pas nécessairement partie de l'inventaire du français normatif. Finalement, la dernière catégorie, *i*-V-*ont* représente les formes à marqueur mixte *i-* *-ont* telles que *i-étiont*, *i-finissent*, *i-travaillent*, etc. Ces formes sont associées au français acadien traditionnel. Les modèles généraux d'alternance de ces variantes selon les facteurs extralinguistiques sont résumés à la figure 1.

4.2.1. *L'effet du réseau ouvert*

Regardons d'abord les résultats relatifs au réseau ouvert. Chez les individus qui ont ce type de réseau, on constate d'une part, l'absence de la variante *i*-V-*ont* et d'autre part, l'augmentation dans l'emploi de la variante *i*-V- \emptyset . En effet, si on compare la fréquence d'emploi de la variante *i*-V- \emptyset des femmes jeunes (F-J = 50%) à celle des femmes plus âgées (F-A = 46%) etc elle des hommes jeunes (H-J = 39%) à celle des hommes plus âgés (H-A = 33%), deux tendances se dessinent. D'abord, les femmes montrent une

Proportions des variantes [N = 4535]

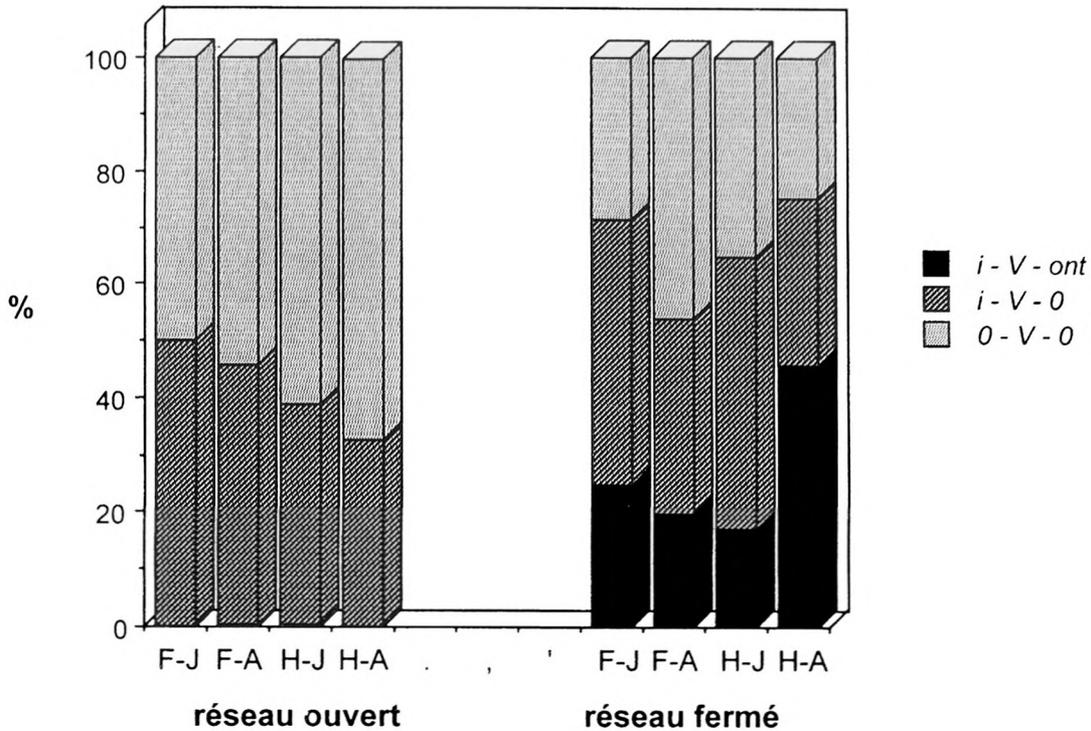


Figure 1 – Proportions des flexions verbales d'après les trois facteurs extralinguistiques :

(F = femme; H = homme; J = jeune; A = plus âgé)

proportion plus importante de formes *i-V-0* que les hommes et ensuite, les individus jeunes emploient cette variante plus fréquemment que les sujets plus âgés et ce chez les deux sexes. Il s'agit ici du modèle classique d'un changement linguistique et de façon globale, ce sont les femmes qui semblent mener dans ce changement.

4.2.2. L'effet du réseau fermé

En ce qui a trait au réseau fermé, l'élément le plus remarquable dans la performance linguistique des individus qui ont ce type de réseau est la présence de la variante traditionnelle *i-V-ont*. Ce sont les hommes plus

âgés (H-A = 46%) qui en font le plus souvent usage. Chez les autres groupes d'individus de ce réseau, on note que les fréquences d'emploi de cette variante traditionnelle sont beaucoup plus basses – les femmes jeunes (F-J = 25%), les femmes plus âgées (F-A = 20%) et les hommes jeunes (H-J = 17%). La fréquence moyenne pour ces groupes n'est donc que d'environ 20%.

Cependant, d'après ces fréquences, l'influence des facteurs extralinguistiques sur l'emploi moins fréquent de cette forme n'est pas organisée dans une direction spécifique et attendue et il n'est pas évident qu'il s'agisse uniquement d'une diminution de la variante. En d'autres mots, les jeunes ne mènent pas le changement vers une perte de cette forme et les différences entre les femmes et les hommes ne sont pas régulières. Ce que l'on constate à partir des fréquences présentées à la figure 1 est que les femmes jeunes montrent une augmentation de cette variante traditionnelle (F-J = 25%) si on les compare aux femmes plus âgées (F-A = 20%) et aux hommes jeunes (H-J = 17%). Il semble donc qu'il y ait une diminution mais aussi une certaine forme de maintien de cette variante. Il peut s'agir là d'une question d'identité locale ou de la recherche d'une forme d'appartenance sociale qui démarquerait le réseau fermé du réseau ouvert. Cependant, à partir des résultats présentés dans cet article, il est impossible d'élucider plus avant le rôle de cette variante dans l'identité sociale des locuteurs.

Quant à l'emploi de la variante *i-V-ø*, on constate que cette forme atteint des taux d'emploi relativement élevés chez les locuteurs du réseau fermé. D'après les fréquences montrées à la figure 1, ce sont les sujets jeunes – les hommes (H-J = 48%), suivis des femmes (F-J = 47%) – qui ont les taux d'emploi les plus élevés pour cette variante. Ensuite, viennent les sujets plus âgés – les femmes (F-A = 34%) et les hommes (H-A = 29%). Le fait que les individus plus jeunes ont des taux plus élevés de cette variante que les individus plus âgés suggère encore une fois que la grammaticalisation de *i-* est un changement en cours.

4.2.3. Comparaison des deux réseaux

Une comparaison des deux réseaux en ce qui a trait aux taux de fréquence des formes à marqueur préverbal *i-* suggère que la tendance vers un emploi plus important de cette flexion est menée par le réseau fermé alors que le réseau ouvert suit. En effet, les variantes portant un marqueur *i-* sont plus fréquentes chez les sujets du réseau fermé (*i-V-ø* = 40% et *i-V-ont* = 27% pour un total de 67%) que chez les sujets du réseau ouvert (*i-V-ø*

= 42%). Il est donc possible que pour les locuteurs du réseau ouvert le changement vers un emploi plus fréquent de *i-* vienne d'ailleurs. Ceci explique peut-être le fait que parmi les locuteurs du réseau ouvert, ce sont les femmes, peu importe leur âge, qui mènent le changement vers un plus grand emploi de *i-* puisque la plupart des études sociolinguistiques montrent que les femmes sont souvent plus innovatrices que les hommes dans leur comportement linguistique.

Quant au changement vers *i-* chez les locuteurs du réseau fermé, on est en droit de se demander si la présence de la flexion postverbale *-ont* et l'existence du marqueur mixte *i- -ont* favorisent le changement vers *i-V-ø*. Cette question reste à étudier.

En somme, il est évident que deux processus importants sont en cours dans cette communauté linguistique : (1) un maintien de *i-V-ont* qui fait suite à une chute marquée de cette variante et (2) un changement vers *i-V-ø* dont la montée au niveau social suit une trajectoire déterminée par l'interaction de trois facteurs extralinguistiques, le réseau social, le sexe et l'âge.

5. Conclusion

Cette étude exploratoire des processus de grammaticalisation et de perte ou de maintien des affixes verbaux d'accord sujet-verbe 3pl en français acadien du nord-est du Nouveau-Brunswick montre que les diverses combinaisons de la flexion préverbale *i-* avec la flexion postverbale *-ont*, la flexion *-ent* ou les radicaux irréguliers dans un corpus de 48 heures de langage spontané peuvent être regroupées en cinq variantes. Ces variantes ont une distribution spécifique d'après le nombre de radicaux 3pl qu'ont les verbes, ce qui justifie de traiter les verbes à un radical 3pl au présent tels que *aimer*, *finir*, etc. comme une variable différente des verbes à deux radicaux tels que *avoir*, *aller*, *être* et *faire*.

Dans le corpus étudié – 4 535 exemples de formes verbales 3pl – l'emploi de *i-* est un processus relativement commun (plus de 50% des occurrences), alors que l'emploi de *i- -ont* semble être plus limité (15% des formes).

Parmi les contextes linguistiques dont les effets sont pertinents à l'ensemble des occurrences du corpus, ceux qui favorisent le plus la présence de la flexion préverbale *i-* et de la flexion postverbale *-ont* sont (1) le temps présent, (2) la présence d'un autre affixe pluriel et (3) la présence d'un pro-arbitraire dans la position syntaxique du sujet.

Les modèles généraux d'emploi des formes selon les facteurs extralinguistiques suggèrent que la grammaticalisation de *i-* est un changement linguistique en cours qui touche tous les locuteurs de notre échantillon qu'ils aient un réseau fermé ou un réseau ouvert. Quant au maintien de la flexion postverbale traditionnelle, il s'agit d'un phénomène relié au réseau fermé.

En somme, les tendances mises à jour dans cette analyse exploratoire méritent d'être étudiées plus avant à l'aide de méthodes qui permettent des conclusions plus robustes que celles faites à partir de simple fréquences.

Notes

1. Notons que certaines variétés de français parlé dans les provinces Atlantiques (Flikeid 1988, King 1988, Péronnet 1990) ont encore une flexion postverbale de première personne du pluriel *-ons*, même si le clitique sujet qui accompagne cette forme n'est pas *nous* mais *je* (*je faisons*).

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Registres lafourchais du cadien louisianais

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La communication suivante présente certaines observations sur un corpus de français louisianais recueilli par le regretté Dr. John Guilbeau de l'Université de la Louisiane et de Winthrop College en Caroline du Sud (États-Unis). Les enquêtes de ce corpus datent des années quarante jusque dans les années soixante et sont intégrés dans un manuel de phonétique scolaire, où ils servent de textes d'accompagnement sonores avec transcription phonétique en indice. Ce manuel, composé par un collègue à partir des documents pédagogiques de l'auteur, est demeuré inédit.¹

1. *L'intérêt de ce corpus*

L'intérêt de ses textes est dans la variété de locales qui y sont représentés mais aussi dans l'absence de commentaires sur ces variétés, à part un seul document en créole. Ce dernier est étiqueté comme étant en créole et sert ostensiblement de point de contraste² dans l'élaboration d'une norme louisianaise. La variété créole est traitée comme étant une langue à part; toujours est-il que la question de registre dans d'autres variétés de français n'est pas reconnue dans le texte.

La nonchalance sur l'absence ou la présence du français cadien surprend. L'auteur était, avec d'autres professeurs, directeur de thèses à l'Université de Louisiane où travaillaient un certain nombre de candidats à la maîtrise. Leurs thèses sont, pour la plupart, des glossaires différentiels ou sur le français louisianais ou sur le créole, et ces deux variétés de français sont toujours distinguées. Il n'en est pas ainsi pour le cadien. Aucune thèse ne prétend adresser cette variété, qui est vraisemblablement vue comme étant un registre très dégradé du français louisianais. Pourtant, le premier article érudit sur le sujet du français louisianais traite le cadien; que le cadien était une variété distincte était clair en 1891 pour le professeur Alcée Fortier de l'Université Tulane. Un siècle plus tard, plus personne ne reconnaît l'existence de variétés autres que le cadien et le créole. Ces omissions suscitent un certain nombre d'observations que je vais énumérer avant de passer à un examen des données du corpus.

1. Le ‘français louisianais’ était très proche au français normé (métropolitain), à la différence du ‘patois nègre’ [le créole] et de ‘la variété dialectale’ du français, soit le cadien, qui est tout de même reconnu par un seul glossairiste louisianais.³ Aussi est-il que les trois distinctions figurent dans la description du paysage linguistique louisianais qui est offerte par l’almanac du Works Project Administration de l’année 1940, un inventaire national du patrimoine culturel.⁴

2. Il est clair, d’après la comparaison à faire à base des textes de Guilbeau et de ceux d’un créoliste contemporain (Phillips), que certains traits dialectaux du cadien qui sont communs au créole louisianais sont supposés d’être d’origine créole, et qu’ils sont à corriger.

3. Les textes présentés par Guilbeau ne sont pas uniformes; ils manifestent des registres différents et divers degrés de créolisation et encore un taux inégal de dialectalismes qui survivent, selon leur localisation géographique.

4. Il est à présumer que le français de ville ou de plantation a toujours exercé une pression normalisante et prescriptive sur le français des campagnes. L’assimilation du français cadien vers une norme métropolitaine ressemble à un processus de décréolisation.

Puisque cette communication repose sur les contrastes avec les dialectes avoisinants que présente ce corpus, je présente les données de Guilbeau selon des typologies: (a) typologie cadienne moderne, dont les points communs sont des plus banaux, et (b) autres typologies, soit cadienne soit créole.

2. *Textes présentes par Guilbeau: Le français louisianais (1960)*

2.1. *FrL: Phonologie*

2.1.1. *Reliques*

Ces lexes sont des formes figées, produits d’une évolution phonologique qui n’est plus en cours.

1. Vocalisation de /l/ en finale au pluriel: *un bocal, des bocaux* /boco/ (Texte #1)
2. *chez* /sé/: généralisé dans ce corpus

3. interjection /djé/ 'regarde [ça]!' (# 3) ⁵
4. *là où* /la avu k/
5. Relique au subjonctif: *que ça soit* /k sa swéy/

2.1.2. Marqueurs cadjens

Ces évolutions phonologiques sont toujours productives.

Consonantiques:

1. assimilation de /l/ en finale dans le suffixe 'il': *un baril* /bari/
2. simplification des groupes de consonnes en finale, articulation de la consonne secondaire finale: *vendre* /vān/; *ensemble* /āsam/
3. vocalisation de /sh/ en /z/: *acheter* /azté/
4. simplification de /v/ intervocalique en /w/: *envoyer* /āwayé/
5. interchange des liquides /l – r – n /:
on /ol/ est obligé de ... (#2); *calculer* /karkülé/; *carton* /kaltrō/
(#7)
6. /h/ aspirée articulée: *haut* /ho/; *haler* /halé/
7. amuïssement de /r/ en groupe consonantal: *parce que* /paskə/
8. neutralisation de /l/ en groupe initial /pl/: *plus* /pu/; *à peu près* /a pü prè

Vocaliques:

1. Labialisation des voyelles dans l'environnement d'une consonne labiale:
premier /prömyé/; *à peu près* /a pü prè/; *milieu* /mülyœ/;
'*bebelle*' /böbèl/;
la meilleure /möyœr/; *proposé* /pröpo.sé/
2. jeu d'ouverture et de fermeture des voyelles selon l'ouverture de la syllabe:
autres /öt/; *il fallait* < *il faut* /i fo.lé/; *il faudra* /i fōra/
3. nasalisation régressive (une attestation): *prenait* /prāné/

4. métaphonie: *fusil* /fizi/; *prémédité* /prémidité/
5. types *un, une* /ẽ, èn/; à côté des types /õẽ, ün/
6. prosthèse en /a/ ou /e/ avant /r/ initiale: *retourner* /arturné/; *rien* /aryẽ/
7. ouverture de la voyelle /a/ avant /r/ initiale: *argent* /èrzã/

2.1.3. *Reflexes français communs à d'autres dialectes apparentés*
Ceux-ci ne sont pas particuliers aux seules langues acadiennes.

1. 'Flottement' entre /wé/ et /wa/: réflexe normé /wé/ presque invariable:
moi /mwa/, *fois* /fwa/, *loin* /lwẽ/; *voisin* /vwazẽ/
Sauf: *que ca soit* /swéy/ (texte #6); *soit ... ou ...* /swa/ (#6)
2. Conservation des désinences verbales de timbre ouvert en syllable ouverte:
/espèrè/, /truvè/ (#13)

2.1.4. *Réflexes créoles*

Un certain nombre de reliques en cadien paraissent relever du contact avec le créole louisianais.

1. métaphonie: *prémédité* /prémidité/; *fusil* /fizi/
2. pronom personnel disjonctif, 1^{re} pers. Sg. /mõ/ ('moi')

2.2. *FrL: Particularismes lexicaux*

2.2.1. *Dérivant du français régional lousianais et commun peut-être au cadien*

1. être *fier* de voir qqn ('content')
2. *souliers* (pas 'chaussures')
3. aller *en ville* (à la Nouvelle Orléans, [seule ville imaginable]); calque angl.: 'to the City'
4. passer en *charrette* ('wagon' ; péj. d'après Daigle, *Dictionnaire*)
5. *s'assir* ('s'asseoir')

6. *menir* ('venir') /mnir/, part. /mnü/
7. *tre canaille* ('espiègle')
8. *proche tout nous autres* ('presque') /proS tu nu zòt/
9. *eine bonne rincée* ('fessée')
10. *eine batisse* (un édifice)
11. avoir, perdre son *idée* ('facultés mentales')
12. *seulement* ('même'), *Je ne savais pas qu'il était malade seulement* ('Je ne savais même pas qu'il était malade')
13. toponymique: 'Le Grand *Platin*' (bassin d'eau) (#12)
14. *le monde* ('famille') (#12)

2.2.2. *Anglicismes « standards » à l'usage louisianais, quel que soit la variété*

1. un *stove* en bois (emprunt matériel d'origine américaine)
2. *reviens back* /rəvyẽ bèk/
3. *radio* /rédiyó./ (#8)
4. *wagon* /wo.gõ/ (#8)
5. *flag* /flèg/ ('banderolle de Mardi Gras')
6. un *dzõg* (angl. 'jug')

2.2.3. *Langage du métier*

Ces lexes sont communs à plusieurs variétés.

1. *marchand de paquets* ('archand itinérant')
2. *la suclerie* /sükləri/ ('sucrierie')

2.2.4. *Lexes spéciaux de ces textes*

Ces lexes aussi, difficiles à classer, sont des régionalismes

1. *bocal* (pas 'jarre')
2. *les habillements de mariage* ('costumes de mariage'; cadien: 'le linge')
3. *la carrique* ('capuchon'; Daigle [*Dictionary*] donne 'capuchon')
4. *tant que* ('pendant que') /é tã k'õ n été o miting/
5. 'et tant qu'on était au *meeting*' (#5)

2.2.5. *Cadien* (dont l'origine est confirmée par une comparaison avec l'acadien des Provinces Maritimes)

1. *à c'te heure, asteur* /astœr/
2. *force que* ('parce que') /a fòrs kə/
3. *on est rendu que* ('il advient que; on est arrivé au point où')

4. *autant dire que* ('c'est-à-dire que')
5. *le bord d'en haut, le bord d'en bas* ('pièce de maison' d'en haut, d'en bas)
6. *hangar* /ãgar/ ('magasin de ferme,' angl. Barn)
7. *l'entourage* ('le mûr') /ãturaž /
8. *un jeune bougre* 'un jeune type'
9. *la mêche* /mèS/ ('étang')
10. *le cocodri* /kokodri/ ('alligator')
11. *en bas l'écore* ('au fond/ à la base de la rive') (#10)
12. *taleur* < 'tout à l'heure' ('sous peu on était saoul') /ta lær on été su/ (#10)
13. (forme agglutinée:) un noncle /œ nõk /
chez certains: 'un vieux noncle' (un vieux garçon, un célibataire)
14. *prendre une aire de vent* ('se fier au hasard') (#12)
15. *embarquer* [dans la charrette]' (lang. Maritime: 'partir') (#12)
16. *naviguer un chemin* (s'acheminer par un chemin') (#12)

2.2.6. Creolismes

17. /yoœ/ ('leur'): /yoœ péyé/
18. /mo~/ ('moi ') (#11)

3. FrL: *Particularismes syntactiques*

1. Suppression de *si* dans des hypothèses, suivi de *que* et du temps conditionnel du verbe dans les deux locutions, principale et secondaire
2. ex. 'Si c'était juste les canes du pays, on serait obligé d'arrêter de faire des canes'
/sa sré k züs lé kan du péyi, õ sré óblizé darété de fèr dé kan/

4. FrL: *Particularismes morphologiques*

4.1. Verbes

1. Emploi du passé surcomposé: *après qu'il a eu fini* /après kil a ü fini/
ex. /il a ü fini/ 'il a eu fini' (#13)

2. Locution *être après* pour ‘être en train de’
avec contraction: *t'es après mentir* /té apré mātir/ (progressif
au présent)

Possiblement pour éviter le créolisme: /té pé mentir/
(progressif au passé),
en Lafourche, on dit: ‘t'es *toujours* après mentir?’ (#9)

3. Verbe auxiliaire à l'imparfait, 3^e pl., [ils] *aviont* /aviõ/

4.2. Pronoms

1. Particule interrogatoire /é/ ou /a/ affixée à la majorité des pronoms
interrogatifs
ex. *équand* /ekã/; *là avou* [où] *que* /la avu k/
2. Particules *ce que* postposées à quelques pronoms interrogatifs et
relatifs
ex. *équand ce que* ... /ékã s kə/; *éoù ce* /où/ (#6);
quand ce qu'a (‘quand elle’) /kã s kə/; *pourquoi que* /purkwa kə/
3. Le pronom relatif *ce que* peut être remplacé par *ça, ça que*
ex. *ca il voulait* (#13)
4. Pronom *y* pour *lui*: *pour i donner la main* /pur i doné la mē/

5. Comparaison de phonologie avec le corpus de Phillips (1935), La Paroisse Evangeline: domaine partagé entre le créole et le cadien

1. Reliques de vocalisation de /l/ en finale: /ẽ nãimo/ ‘un animal’
2. Reliques d’une affrication systématique de /t/, /d/, /g/ et /k/ devant
voyelles antérieures écartées et arrondies et devant semi-
voyelles /ü/ et /i/:
/ž œl/ ‘gueule’; /tSœr/ ‘cœur’; /dž ables/ ‘diabliesse’; /tSüé/
‘tuer’; /tSē/ ‘tiens’
3. Assibilation systématique de /t/ et /d/ devant /i/ et /ü/:
/pətsi/ ‘petit’; /tsü/ ‘tu’; /tsüé/ ‘tuer’; /dž ir/ ‘dire’; dž ü /dü/

4. Palatalisation des sibilantes qui suivent une sibilante palatalisée:
/Sèž / ‘chaise’; /Sòž / ‘chose’; /Smiž / ‘chemise’
5. Palatalisation régressive d’une sibilante /s/ qui précède /Z/:
/Süž é/ ‘sujet’; /Sóvaž / ‘sauvage’; /kòrSaž / ‘corsage’
6. Prononciation systématique de /h/ aspirée en initiale et en /hèg/
‘aigre’ et /hak/ ‘acre’
7. Épenthèse (intercalation d’une consonne dans un groupement de
deux d’un point d’articulation semblable): /koSödri/ ‘cochonnerie’
8. Yodicisation de la consonne nasale palatale /gn/ en /i/: /pōjé/
‘poignet’; /pōjé/ ‘poignée’
9. Métaphonie: /simitièr/ ‘cimetière’; /giniy/ ‘guenille’
10. /wé/ pour /wa/ (multiples attestations): /néyé/ ‘noyer’; /āwéjé/
‘envoyer’
11. Nasalisation régressive systématique: /āmā/ ‘amant’; /tāmizé/
‘tamiser’, etc.
12. Nasalisation de /e/ finale adventice: /amidonē/ ‘amidonner’;
/kōpāyē/ ‘compagnie’
13. Fermeture de /e/ ouverte libre en finale dans les verbes à l’imparfait
et au conditionnel
14. Prosthèse en /a/ ou /e/ devant /r/ initiale: /arpasé/ ‘repasser’;
/èrkülé/ ‘reculer’
15. Métathèse en /e/ devant /s/ initiale: /èskwé/ ‘secouer’; /èskus,
éskus/ ‘secousse’
16. Éphérèse: /króSé/ ‘accrocher’; /trapé/ ‘attraper’; /kòfré/ ‘écoffrer’;
/tān/ ‘étendre’

6. *Observations*

1. **Subordination et relativisation:** Au niveau grammatical, les textes de Guilbeau montrent une subordination et une relativisation qui ne font pas forcément partie de la langue cadienne moderne. La créolisation est présente à un degré mineur dans les documents de Guilbeau, tendance qui s'en va croissant dans les quarante ou cinquante ans depuis. La présence d'une relativisation exagérée peut en être une preuve, voire une hypercorrection.
2. **Nivellation lexicale:** Si ce 'français louisianais' est vraiment un mélange de registres normé et dialectal, les textes présents font preuve d'une nivellation lexicale qui est traditionnellement imputée à la post-guerre (années '40-'50) mais qui semble plutôt être bien en marche et partiellement consolidée en cette même période. Il se peut que le brassage linguistique dans ce terrain ait été plutôt une confrontation entre le français métropolitain et le cadien, et non une question de brassage de dialectes cadiens.

Au niveau de la phonologie, les documents de Guilbeau sont un exemplaire de la perte de traits dialectaux cadiens.

Par contre, Phillips (1935) parle de 'la guerre de patois' dans son terrain de la Paroisse Evangéline, où l'on constate une forte présence du créole.

3. Un examen plus détaillé du corpus à paraître de cet auteur louisianais, et une comparaison avec d'autres ouvrages sur les dialectes louisianais, sera sans doute de valeur. Il est à souhaiter que l'ouvrage de Guilbeau revoie le jour sous peu dans un format plus publique.

Notes

1. On s'attend à la publication de ce manuscrit de la part de l'Université de Louisiane. Les enquêtes sont la deuxième série d'une étude de carrière de ce professeur, dont les originales, fragilisées et perdues dans la Deuxième Guerre, ont servi de base de la thèse de l'auteur à l'Université de Paris (1948). La série de documents que présente cet

ouvrage est en effet des documents de remplacement, recueil élaboré de nouveau par l'auteur au fil des années, dans la mesure où une carrière en pédagogie le lui permettait.

2. À en juger par ce document, le créole louisianais aurait comme base le français métropolitain de l'époque colonial; si le premier présente certains indices du contact avec l'acadien louisianais, ce dernier contacte serait postérieur.
3. Maud Trappey (1940), auteure d'un glossaire différentiel sur le français louisianais de la Paroisse [civile] Ibérie, différencie le français de son corpus de 'la variété dialectale.'
4. Almanac of the State of Louisiana, Works Project Administration (Washington, D.C.: National Printing Office, 1940).
5. Les notes renvoient aux textes enregistrés par le Dr. Guilbeau, chacun fourni par un particulier. D'autres attestations se généralisent dans tout le corpus.

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Atlantic Lexicon¹

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1. Introduction

It is appropriate for more than one reason to begin this paper on regional dictionaries and the Atlantic lexicon by referring to the introduction to the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (1982, 1990). The editors – George Story, William Kirwin, and J. D. A. Widdowson – begin their introduction by raising the crucial problem that all dictionary makers must face: determining the scope of the dictionary, the principles for including and excluding words. They start by quoting the *Oxford English Dictionary*, another appropriate place to begin.

“The circle of the English language,” observed the editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “has a well-defined centre but no discernible circumference.” Although this is especially true of the enormous subject to which the *OED* and its *Supplements* are addressed, any dictionary that sets out to describe the word-stock of a nation, or even of a region, within a world-wide speech-community such as that of English must also face, though of course on a much reduced scale, the practical problems of delimiting the lexicon, of marking its boundaries. (1990:xi)

The editors of the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English (DNE)* chose to delimit their selection by following and adapting the more inclusive approach proposed by Walter Avis in *A Dictionary of Canadianisms* (1967, 1991),² rather than the more narrow principles of selection adopted by some US editors such as Mitford Mathews in *A Dictionary of Americanisms* (1951).³ Because of the many factors connecting Canada and the United States, Avis argues “. . . the problem of identifying many terms as specifically ‘American’ or ‘Canadian’ is virtually impossible of solution” (1991:xiii). Consequently, Avis’s definition of Canadianism is more inclusive than that used by Mathews. He states:

A Canadianism, then, is a word, expression, or meaning which is native to Canada or which is distinctively characteristic of Canadian usage though not necessarily exclusive to Canada;

Winnipeg couch falls into the first category, *chesterfield* ('sofa') into the second. (1991:xiii)

This definition allows for two categories of words to enter the dictionary: those that originate in a country or region, and those that are distinctive and characteristic.

The problem that Avis describes – the difficulty of determining the origin of words – is not unique to distinguishing an Americanism from a Canadianism. Editors of regional dictionaries in Atlantic Canada encounter a similar problem. Early in our reading program we noticed that some of the words used distinctively on Cape Breton Island also appear in one or both of the *DNE* and the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English* (Pratt 1988). When we presented our first paper on the Cape Breton dictionary project to ALPA/ALPA, Terry Pratt suggested the term Atlantic lexicon for this shared vocabulary (Davey and MacKinnon 1993). The existence of such a lexicon should not be surprising as the Atlantic Provinces and adjoining states such as Maine share similar (but certainly not identical) geography, settlement history, cultural ties, and several occupations. In addition, movement from one province or state to another has been common since the earliest days of settlement (for example see Clark 1968, Crawley 1988, Hornsby 1992). For these reasons the editors of the *DNE* and *DPEIE* have delimited the boundaries of their dictionaries to allow for the *-ism-* words (i.e., those that are native to a region or country) and those that are distinctively characteristic of the region. It is this principle that the *Dictionary of Cape Breton English* will also adopt.

This paper briefly discusses the words that we believe to be Cape Bretonisms, but our main focus is to begin the exploration of this Atlantic lexicon. In order to limit the focus of this paper, we examine the words that appear in both the *DNE* and *DPEIE* as an initial step. Future research will no doubt indicate that many of the words discussed today are also found in all four provinces and indeed in Maine. In fact, the *Dictionary of American Regional English* (1985-) cites the *DNE*, which, in some instances, has quotations dated earlier than the American citations.⁴ Again, many regional dictionaries seek to collect not only those words that are unique or exclusive to an area but also those that are distinctive and characteristic of a region or country.

2. *Cape Bretonisms*

An obvious example of these words of local origin is the word *Caper* to designate a native of Cape Breton. Although the word has, of course, several senses in Standard English, the limited sense of designating a native of Cape Breton is unique and has originated in Cape Breton, just as *Newfie* has developed in Newfoundland and is recorded in *DNE*. On the other hand, the appearance of the name of the region or country does not ensure that the word has originated in that area. For example, what Americans call *Canadian bacon* is what Canadians call *back bacon* (*Canadian Oxford Dictionary* 1998), despite the adjective assigned to it in the US. Similarly, Mathew's *Dictionary of Americanisms* (1951) lists as Americanisms many other words with *Canada* or *Canadian* as part of the phrase for such things as bird names (*Canada goose*), plants (*Canadian balsam*), and people (*Canadian voyageur*).

Other words that we are investigating as originating in Cape Breton are associated with the social lives of miners and their work (see Davey and MacKinnon 1995). The card game called *tarabish* is known all over the Island but is particularly popular in the Industrial Region. Many miners would play *tarabish* as they traveled to the face or working areas. In the Prince Mine, the last of the Cape Breton mines to close, the miners would travel underground (and under the ocean floor) up to two hours to reach their work areas, allowing ample time to enjoy *tarabish* or *bish*. Another example is *tar paper boots*, a disparaging term to describe the boots miners used to wear before safety regulations required boots with steel toecaps (Smith 1994). With their thin uppers, these boots offered some protection against water, but none at all from falling objects. Another pejorative term is the *Pluck-me Store* or simply the *Pluck-me*, designating the Company Store that sold goods on credit and deducted payment from the miners' pay using the *check-off system* (Frank 1979, Mellor 1983).

Other examples deal with the illegal production of alcohol. *Cape Breton silver* appearing in Allister MacGillivray's song of the same name (in O'Donnell 1992:162-64) humorously refers to moonshine. It seems to derive by analogy from *Cape Breton gold*, which in turn alludes to coal, a major resource in Cape Breton since the early 1700s. Another word associated with the illegal production of liquor is *hanks* (Currie 1979, Mellor 1983, Currie 2002), the gallon vinegar jugs used to hold the moonshine.

3. *Atlantic lexicon*

In addition to these examples of Cape Bretonisms, this paper discusses a second group of words that belong to the Atlantic lexicon. For the purposes of this paper, we consider those words listed in the regional dictionaries of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island and also found on Cape Breton Island. In order to make a thorough comparison of the two dictionaries, we began by listing the headwords and combinations from *DNE* and *DPEIE*. This resulted in a list of 157 pages, with approximately 8,300 words, illustrating once again the sad but true adage, that life is short but scholarship is long. From this list of headwords, we culled 185 groups of words with identical spellings, but some of these turned out to be homographs (words with identical spelling but a different meaning or origin). While homographs occur in standard varieties of English (such as the well-known example of the noun *wind* and the verb *wind*), they are more numerous in non-standard English. For example, *fiddler* appears in both dictionaries and would seem straightforward enough, but in fact the meaning is different on both islands. On Prince Edward Island, a *fiddler* designates any small fish. In Newfoundland a *fiddler* is a 'musician who performs for a dance (on an accordion)' (*DNE*). Similarly, in Newfoundland *snotty* is used in the phrase *snotty var* to identify the balsam-fir whereas in Prince Edward Island *snotty* is an adjective describing damp and drizzly weather. Newfoundlanders use *posy* for 'a flower of a dandelion, buttercup, etc.' (*DNE*), but in Prince Edward Island it refers to an 'attractive young woman' (*DPEIE*).

We next determined which of these 185 groups of words had similar meanings. Approximately half fell into this category, resulting in 78 pairs of words with identical meaning and another eleven pairs that are close in meaning. An example from the first group is *bakeapple*, the amber coloured berry that resembles a raspberry in shape and grows in boggy areas. An example from the second group is the verb *snig*, meaning to haul logs out of the woods, but *DNE* describes the action as being done by hand, whereas the *DPEIE* defines it as 'to drag (logs) out of the woods by horse.' In Cape Breton, informants have described the procedure as dragging the logs with an ox, horse, tractor, or ATV. To facilitate the discussion of these words, we have combined the two groups, resulting in 89 words that are similar or close in meaning. We have recorded the full list in the Appendix and discuss only some of these because of lack of space.

To learn how many of these pairs of words are also used on Cape Breton Island, we began by checking our citation file and conducted a small pilot study where we interviewed five natives of Cape Breton to see if they used or knew any of the 89 words and meanings. In addition, we are currently conducting fieldwork with two surveys or questionnaires to discover if these words are used in Cape Breton and to learn something about their geographical distribution. The first is a postal survey (S I) which asks informants to indicate if they ‘use, have heard, or do not know’ the word, and to comment on the meaning given for each word. The second survey (S II) seeks the same sort of information but is intended for commercial fishers. We are using interviews for the second survey since fishing terminology varies from harbour to harbour. For example, the loop of quarter inch cord used to attach fish hooks to a trawl is called a *snood* by a fisher from Port Caledonia but a *gangin* by others in Main-à-Dieu, roughly twenty kilometers away. *DNE* lists *gangeing* with a similar meaning. Our research is ongoing, but to date we have completed thirty of the postal surveys and eight of the specialized surveys. Of these 89 words with similar or close meanings, all but four are also used on Cape Breton Island, and many of these may very well also be found elsewhere in the Maritimes.

4. Discussion

Even a cursory glance at the remaining 85 words found in all three regions reveals that the largest group are related to commercial fishing and the lobster fishery. The definitions, here and below, are taken from *DNE* and *DPEIE*. Again, several of these words will be familiar to those from peninsular Nova Scotia and New Brunswick: *hangashore* (a fisherman too lazy to fish), *bait box*, *bait shed*, *flake* (a wooden frame for drying fish), *stage* (an elevated platform near the shore where fish are unloaded), *kellick* or *killick* (an anchor made of stone and framed in pieces of flexible wood), and a *one lunger* (a boat with a single-cylinder engine or the engine itself). The terms *bait box* and *bait shed* recall an older practice of using salted bait stored in sheds and carried in boxes; now the bait is more often frozen and carried in five gallon plastic *bait buckets* (S II). Lobster fishing is represented with terms such as *button* (a wooden device used to lock the door of a lobster trap), *head* or *heading* (the funnel-shaped netting through which the lobster enters the trap, *DNE*, or twine mesh for a lobster trap, *DPEIE*), and *twine needle* (a flat tool used for knitting nets or the mesh

pieces for a lobster trap). As one informant commented, the various sections or compartments of the lobster trap are 'quite domesticated' (S II:4). The section that holds the bait is called the *kitchen*. When the lobster tries to leave the trap after having taken the bait, it usually moves through another funnel-shaped net into the second section, called the *parlour*. Our early results indicate that the fishermen in different areas vary the terminology. Most use *parlour* for the second section, but some use *jail*, *prison*, or *penitentiary*. As we complete more surveys, we will be able to determine which is characteristic. Rose Mary Babitch's (1996) thorough study of fishing vocabulary of the islands of Lamèque and Miscou demonstrates a similar variety of terms. Our interviews indicate that some of the terms discussed by Babitch are also used in the Cape Breton fishery, such as *snood*, *kellick*, and *cuisine* for *kitchen* (1996:114-15). Using the second survey intended for commercial fishers, we have recorded several other terms, such as *dummy rocks* that are used as temporary ballast in the wooden traps until the wood becomes water logged enough to sink with the permanent ballast framed in the bottom of the trap.

Another large group of words refer to farming and rural activities. A *barrack* is a 'structure consisting of four posts and a movable roof, designed to protect hay from rain and snow' (*DNE*), a *double sled* is a heavy sleigh drawn by two horses (or two sleighs joined together), a *sloven* is a low, horse-drawn wagon, used to haul heavy loads, a *longer* is an unfinished wooden pole, and a *longer fence* is a made with unfinished poles. Other examples are verbs: to *stog* or fill the cracks of a log cabin or in phrases such as *to stog oneself with food*, to *junk* or to cut wood or meat into workable sizes, to *swinge* or scorch the feathers off a bird, and to *snig* logs out of the woods.

A third group of words refer to different kinds of ice. *Field ice* is a large, flat area of floating ice, *running ice* is the pans of sea ice carried by the current or wind, *shore ice* is the sea ice attached to the shore. *Rafts* of ice describe sheets of ice that are piled on top of each other. Survey II indicates that *rafting* is restricted to piles of ice off shore, but the same ice conditions on the shoreline are called *barricades*. *Lolly* is soft ice floating in salt water, and *slob ice* is a mass of densely packed ice fragments on the surface of the sea. Several of our respondents described *lolly* as new ice formed along the shore while in the process of hardening whereas *slob ice* is old sea ice, broken and ground into ice fragments and is found further from the shore (S II). A new term we are exploring as a Cape Bretonism is

red ice; the reddish tinged ice from the Gulf of St. Lawrence is the last of the drift ice, and, consequently, its arrival is eagerly awaited as a sure sign of spring.

A smaller group of words are associated with food or eating, two of which are also used throughout the Atlantic Provinces - *bakeapples* and *scoff* (a large, good-tasting meal). Other food terms may be less widely used: *baker's fog* or *fog* is a disparaging term used for white bakery bread because it was so light in contrast to homemade bread. One informant recalled 'If my mother ran out of homemade bread, she might say "Go for a couple of loaves of fog at the store"' (Survey I:23). A *dipper* is a saucepan that is used for cooking as opposed to the standard meaning.

Other words seem to be relics recalling the ethnic speech patterns of earlier immigrants. The so-called *after-perfect* indicates the completion of an action and is used in expressions like 'I was after closing the door, when the phone rang.' It is no doubt common where Celtic people and their descendents live (see *OED2*, *DARE*, Crystal 1991:6). Similarly, *omadan* or *omadhaun*, designating a fool, comes from either Irish or Scotch Gaelic (MacLennan 1979, MacNeil 1996) and also made its way into the *Dictionary of American Regional English*.

The smallest group of words may in fact be in general usage outside of the Atlantic Region and may have been included in the Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island dictionaries before these words were widely established. We suspect that *ignorant*, referring to someone who is rude or ill-mannered (*Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* 1995, *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* 1998), and *bar harbour* (identified as 'North American' in *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* 1998) are widely used in the United States and in Canada.

5. Conclusion

This collection of words that we have identified as belonging to an Atlantic lexicon may at first seem to be an odd choice for a regional dictionary that presumes to represent Cape Breton English. Indeed, these words would be excluded if the aim of the dictionary were to record only those words originating in or native to Cape Breton. The purpose of this dictionary, however, is to represent the lexicon that is distinctively

characteristic of Cape Breton in contrast to other varieties of English designated as 'Standard' (see Millward 1996:348). While this will be our general principle for inclusion, the selection of words along the 'no discernible circumference' of the English language – mentioned by the editors of the *OED* – will no doubt continue to provoke discussion and debate as we refine our selection process.

Once dictionaries similar to the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* and the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English* are completed for the Atlantic Region, it will then be possible to create a comprehensive dictionary, similar to Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-1905) and the ongoing work of the *Dictionary of American Regional English*. It would then be possible to document the distribution of a word like *skiff* (a light, even fall of snow) that is used in Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, and parts of New Brunswick, but not apparently in Newfoundland. The Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island dictionaries have taken important steps in answering this sort of question. We hope the Dictionary of Cape Breton English will continue this work. As Terry Pratt suggested half-jokingly in 1993, perhaps this investigation of the Atlantic lexicon would make an interesting SSHRCC proposal.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, XI, 10 May 1996, at the Université de Moncton.
2. The principles of selection used by the editors of the *DNE* are, of course, far more complicated than this, and the full discussion is found in the 'Scope of the Dictionary' (1991:xi-xiv).
3. Avis explains that he uses Canadianism

. . . in a more inclusive sense than *Americanism* has been used by scholars in the United States. Mitford M. Mathews, for example, defines the term in his Preface to *A Dictionary of Americanisms* as "a word or expression which originated in the United States." Yet in his dictionary he uses a wide variety of Canadian source materials as evidence for a substantial number of

‘Americanisms,’ a practice which, to say the least, weakens his definition. (1991:xii)

William A. Craigie and James Root Hulbert follow the broader principle of inclusion in their *A Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles* (1938-1944 vol. 1:v). For a useful discussion of regional dictionaries see Tom McArthur (1992:587-59).

4. For example, in defining *gad*, *gansey*, and *omadhaun*, the *Dictionary of American Regional English* refers to *DNE*, which has earlier dates than any of the illustrative quotations cited by *DARE* for these words. In total, *DARE* records 28 of the 89 words discussed below as part of the Atlantic lexicon. Similarly, *DARE* indicates that a number of the fishing terms discussed below are also found in Maine: *head*, *kitchen*, *outside*, and *parlor* (noted in the citation for *kitchen*). Perhaps because of the international trade, these fishing terms easily cross borders and regions.

Appendix**Categories of Words**

Fishing Terms	barrack	Loan Words
(h)angashore	boxy	after
bait box	bunk	omadán/omadhaun
bait shed	clobber	
bow	double sled	Miscellaneous
button	green	dress
dip net	junk	evening
flake	longer and longer fence	handy
gad	sloven	heat
gansey	snig	mind
gib	split	pick
gurdy	stog, stogging	rightify
haul-up	swinge	sprog
head, heading	var	stepmother's breath
inside		time
kellick (or	Types of Ice	
killick)	clumpet	Types of People and
kitchen	field ice	Qualities
knit	lolly	ignorant
make [fish]	raft, rafting	strel
one-lunger	running ice	widow man
outside	shore ice	
parlour	silver frost	Coastal Features and
round	slob ice and slobby	Weather
side head		barachois
spawn	Food, Drink, and	bar harbour
spring herring	Related Terms	breeze
stage	bakeapple	dirt
trawl	baker's fog or fog	run
twine needle	dipper	tight
whore's egg	horn	
	loaf bread	Actions
Farming and	scoff	gaff
Rural Terms	script	gaffle
back kitchen		guzzle

Words**Unattested****In Cape Breton**

clever

dunch

kitchen parlor

ton timber

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Vowel Variation in Cappahayden, An Irish Southern Shore Newfoundland Community

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1. Scope and objectives

My study examines the sociolinguistic patterning of several linguistic variables in Cappahayden, a rural fishing community located on the southern Avalon peninsula of Newfoundland. I follow a Labovian variationist framework in which quantitative methods are used to examine the relationship between language variation and social factors such as gender, age, and ethnicity in a range of conversational styles. This is a family study in which seven participants from a single family were chosen to represent the speech community of Cappahayden. The aim is to examine whether selected linguistic variables correlate with the social factors of gender, age, and community residency, along with attitudes to the local community.

2. Previous research

The groundwork for variationist sociolinguistic research was laid by Labov in 1966, through his investigation of the social stratification of English in New York City. Labov showed that language variation is patterned, and that age and gender play significant roles in accounting for this variation. Many studies have adopted Labov's variationist approach. In both urban studies and rural studies conducted in Newfoundland, the general finding is that women are more sensitive to language change than men of the same age group and socio-economic background. As a result, they are more likely to adopt features which characterize standard or supralocal norms, while men are more likely to use features which characterize the local area, features which may be stigmatized relative to the standard. In regards to age, it is the younger speakers who are the innovators of language change. Age and gender often interact, with the result that younger females are typically in the vanguard of linguistic change.

3. The community of Cappahayden

Cappahayden is located some 90 kilometres south of St. John's on the province's 'Southern Shore.' This area has been almost exclusively Irish since the early 19th century, with the majority of immigrants arriving from five southeast Irish counties: Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork and Tipperary. The five families that originally settled in Cappahayden still have descendents there today and they can be recognized by the family names Murphy, Lawlor, Cahill, Sheehan and Guiney. Cappahayden was known purely as a small fishing community, despite the fact that the rough geographic layout of the community meant that all of its boats and fishing gear were set up in neighbouring Renew's. The community is probably best known as the site of the shipwreck of the *Florizel*, which went aground one kilometre south of Cappahayden on February 27, 1918.

Cappahayden has always had a small population. Currently there are only five families residing there, and the total population is approximately 75. For census purposes the community is often combined with the nearby community of Renew's; according to the 1999 census, the combined population was 503. From previous censuses it is clear that the population of Cappahayden is decreasing yearly. This decline in population reflects the effect of the cod moratorium imposed by the government in 1992. Since the loss of the cod fishery the linguistic situation in Cappahayden – as in many other Newfoundland communities – is one in which local varieties are receding, in the sense that numbers of native speakers of the local varieties, especially those between the ages of 20-25, are migrating to larger communities in search of employment.

4. Significance of proposed research

To date virtually no sociolinguistic studies have been conducted on the Southern Shore, and no studies have focussed on any individual community in this region. Clarke (1997) noted that the isolation of the communities on the Southern Shore has led to the retention of a number of features brought by the Irish immigrants, among them postvocalic clear (l) and postvocalic (t) pronounced as a slit fricative.

In present-day Cappahayden, the outmigration of younger generations would suggest that local varieties are receding. However, loss of local

varieties is not the only potential linguistic outcome of population loss. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1999) introduce two models of dialect death based on their studies of moribund varieties in small island communities in the United States. The first of these, the dissipation model, constitutes the expected norm: local dialect features are lost or eroded due to the outmigration of native speakers. The second model (the concentration model) represents cases in which local speakers heighten their language distinctiveness in fear of losing it to the encroaching supralocal norms. While the former model is also the norm in Newfoundland studies, the latter has also been found (e.g. Lanari 1994). Since Cappahayden is a community in decline, it provides an opportunity to investigate this issue.

5. Hypothesis

Based on the general findings of previous research, I too hypothesized that gender and age would interact, in that younger females would be leading language change in the direction of the adoption of community-external or supralocal norms. However, I anticipated that, as in several rural Newfoundland studies, gender would prove to be more significant than age.

6. Methodology

6.1. Selection of linguistic variables

Labov (1972) noted that in order for a linguistic variable to prove significant three criteria must be met. First, an item must be frequent and occur often in both formal and casual speech situations. Secondly, the variable should be structural, meaning the more the item is integrated into a larger system of functioning units the greater the intrinsic interest of study. Finally, the distribution of the variable should be highly stratified over a range of social factors such as age and gender.

With these three criteria in mind I chose to investigate two vocalic variables: non-upglided (and often) monophthongal pronunciations of (eɪ), and the unrounding and possible lowering of (oɪ).

6.1.1. *Non-upglided (e)*

This variable represents the mid front tense vowel of words such as *day* and *late*, which in Standard English is realized as the upglided diphthong [eɪ]. In the Irish varieties of the southern Avalon Peninsula, as in conservative varieties spoken in areas of the province settled by the southwest English, the local variant is a monophthongal, non-upglided and often lengthened [e:], variably lowered in the direction of [ɛ:], and variably inglided, i.e., tending towards [e(:)ə] or [ɛ(:)ə]. This study contrasts the standard-like [eɪ] variants with a local variant that comprises a range of non-upglided realizations, whether or not monophthongal.

In Newfoundland studies, higher usage of non-upglided variants have been found among older than among younger generations, and males have been found to make greater use of such variants than females.

6.1.2. *Unrounding (and possible lowering) of (o)*

This variable represents the rounded diphthong (oɪ) in words such as *toy*, *employ* and *soil*. It may be realized locally as unrounded centralized, mid [əɪ] or back [ʌɪ], or as unrounded, lowered [aɪ]. This is common in both Irish and English areas of the island. This study examines the social stratification of the local unrounded variant (i.e., realized in the range of [ʌɪ], [əɪ] or [aɪ]), in contrast to the standard [ɔɪ]-like pronunciation.

6.2. *Social variables*

The social variables of gender, age and residency were investigated in this study. The social variable of socio-economic class was not considered as a separate variable.

6.2.1. *Gender*

The present study examined how Cappahayden males and females compared with residents of other Newfoundland communities that have been investigated sociolinguistically. It was expected that the females in this study would conform to the supralocal norms while the males would tend to retain their Cappahayden features.

6.2.2. *Age*

Like gender, age was expected to be a significant variable in Cappahayden. The study constituted an intergenerational study, in that it examined the speech of a father, a mother and five of their children. This sample therefore encompasses two groups: older (65+) and younger (26-

38). As previous Newfoundland studies have shown (e.g. Reid 1981; Colbourne 1982; Clarke 1991; Lanari 1994; Newhook 2002), age is highly significant with respect to language feature usage. While the general finding has been that older speakers retain the local varieties while younger speakers show greater adoption of supralocal norms, there are exceptions.

6.2.3. *Residency*

Another social factor that was expected to be significant was residency. This study contrasted the speech of current residents of Cappahayden with that of former residents who had moved to a more urbanized area (Conception Bay South) that is close to the major urban centre of the island, St. John's. It was expected that the family members who had remained in Cappahayden would use more of the local features than the participants who now resided in Conception Bay South (CBS). Though the same features do occur among some residents of CBS, they are considerably more rare than in Cappahayden. A factor in migrants' degree of conformity to the linguistic norms of their new community involves the attitudes that they have to both this community and their community of origin. To test the latter, I devised an attitude scale consisting of the following four statements:

- i) All things being equal, I would prefer to live in Cappahayden than anywhere else.
- ii) I would encourage young people to move out of Cappahayden, since there is no future (t)here for them.
- iii) Cappahayden is an ideal place to raise a family today.
- iv a) (For residents of Cappahayden) I'm glad that I stayed in Cappahayden rather than moving somewhere else.
- iv b) (For residents of CBS) I'm glad that I live in CBS rather than in Cappahayden.

Each statement was scored according to the following five-point measure:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Neutral
- 3 = Strongly agree

For each statement, participants were asked to circle the number that best corresponded to their feelings. An overall local attitude score was calculated for each participant, consisting of the mean score over the four

statements. The attitude scale was devised to help determine whether attitudes to the local community play a role in speakers' adoption of supralocal norms.

6.3. *Participant selection*

As previously mentioned, the sample consisted of seven participants all from one family. These were a father (aged 73, here identified as OM), and a mother (aged 65, identified as OF), both of whom reside in Cappahayden. The remaining participants consisted of five of their seven children.

Of the three sons, the first younger male participant (YM1) was 36 years old and had resided in Cappahayden his entire life. The second younger male participant (YM2) was 26 years old and currently resided in Conception Bay South, where he had lived for the previous eight years. The third younger male participant (YM3) was 29 years old, and had lived in Conception Bay South for 10 years. The two daughters aged 34 (YF1) and 38 (YF2) had both lived in Conception Bay South for over 15 years. Since all participants are from a single family, they share a working-class socio-economic background. However as they became older their backgrounds changed. OM, OF and YM1 have maintained their working class status since their employment has always involved either the fishery or carpentry. The remaining participants, however, now have middle class status: the two younger males own and operate their own business and the two females are employed in the administrative sector.

Education is also a factor that divides the two groups. OM and OF both have junior high educations, while YM1 has a high school education. All of the remaining participants (i.e., those who have moved to Conception Bay South) attended a post-secondary vocational school.

6.4. *Interview procedure*

To examine stylistic variation in Cappahayden speech two elicitation frames were used. The first of these was a Word List. The participants were presented with a list of seventy words and asked to read aloud as naturally as possible. It was hoped that this would capture a style approximating formal speech. The second consisted of Casual Conversation: a large portion of the interview attempted to elicit vernacular style through various questions on selected topics, as well as via unstructured conversation on

topics of the participants' choice. In attempting to obtain vernacular speech I had to be mindful of the observer's paradox, which results from the effects of direct observation on one's language (see Milroy 1987). While it is vernacular speech that sociolinguists are primarily interested in capturing, speakers will shy away from the vernacular and shift towards a more formal speech if they focus on the fact that they are being tape-recorded by a stranger. In this study, I attempted to overcome the observer's paradox by employing several techniques used by Labov (1972). The first of these was to interview in an informal, familiar environment, namely, the home of the participants or a family member. A second technique derived from Labov was to interview in groups so that the speakers would not wait for questions to be posed by the interviewer but talk freely amongst themselves. A third technique was to make use of an inside interviewer who had close network ties with the participants – in this case, one of the participants with whom I was a personal friend, rather than simply a researcher from Memorial University. The speech of this person was also recorded, and she therefore became a participant-observer, one of the two younger females whose speech was investigated in the study.

Each tape-recorded interview lasted between two and three hours, and involved two or three participants simultaneously. The interviews were recorded on a Sony TC-142 cassette recorder. So that intrusion would be minimal, a tabletop microphone was used in all of the interviews.

6.5. Data analysis

In order to test the significance of the independent variables age, gender and residency the variables were tested separately in each speech style, using the one-way analysis of variance program (ANOVA) of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 9.0. In addition a 2 x 2 analysis of variance was run for Age and Gender, to test whether there were significant interactions between the two. The input to the program was each individual participant's mean ratio per local variant, per style. This was calculated by dividing the actual number of local (i.e., Cappahayden) pronunciations over the total number of tokens of that variable.

7. Results

7.1. Results for the attitude scale

As Table 1 shows, the oldest male had the highest positive attitude towards Cappahayden, followed by YM1 who was the only younger participant to stay in Cappahayden. Surprisingly the next highest score was obtained by YF2. All other participants including OF had fairly neutral attitudes. The gender difference between the two older speakers is quite striking.

Table 1: Mean attitude results for each participant

Participants	Residency	Mean Attitude Results
OM	Cappahayden	4
OF	Cappahayden	2.75
YM1	Cappahayden	3.25
YM2	Conception Bay South	2.75
YM3	Conception Bay South	2.75
YF1	Conception Bay South	2.5
YF2	Conception Bay South	3.00

7.2. Results in casual style for (e1)

My expectations were not borne out, in that the social variables of gender, age and residency proved not to be significant in casual style. Yet the overall findings were as expected: females used less of the local variants for both variables than males; the younger generation conformed more than the older speakers to the supralocal norms; and the same was true of current residents of Conception Bay South as opposed to Cappahayden. This is illustrated in Tables 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 2: Local variant of (eɪ). Mean use for gender in casual speech style (non-significant)

Gender	Mean
Male	0.65
Female	0.53

Table 3: Local variant of (eɪ). Mean use for age in casual speech style (non-significant)

Age	Mean
Older	0.7
Younger	0.57

Table 4: Local variant of (eɪ). Mean use for residency in casual speech style (non-significant)

Residency	Mean
Cappahayden	0.72
Conception Bay South	0.5

However when I examined individual speaker's usage of the local variants, it became obvious that there was considerable interspeaker variability within each social group – this probably explains why group differences did not prove significant. There was considerable disparity between the two younger females. YF2 made much greater use of the local variants for both variables than YF1, a fact that may be explained by a difference in local orientation, since on the attitude scale YF2 had a much higher positive orientation towards the community of Cappahayden than did YF1. The younger males acted in the direction one would expect, that is YM1 used much more of the local pronunciations than his brothers in CBS.

7.3. Stylistic variation

I also examined the degree to which the three social variables affect variant choice in formal speech style. Labov (1972) said that style can be measured according to the amount of attention paid to one's speech. Thus in this study, formal style was elicited via a word list as previously mentioned. The mean percentage of usage of each variant in the word list was recorded for each group and then compared to the casual style results. Results show that the overall use of the local variant decreased from casual style to formal style for both variables; as might be expected, the greater style shift occurred for the variable (oi), which has a higher saliency in the local community and consequently a greater awareness on the part of speakers. As in casual style, none of the social variables of age, gender and residency proved significant for either (ei) or (oi) in formal style.

Table 5: Percentage of style shifting per gender

Variable	Male	Female
(ei)	0.06	0.32
(oi)	0.15	0.36

As Table 5 illustrates, the females style-shifted the most for both of the variables. They style shifted 26% more than males for the variable (ei) and 21% more for the variable (oi).

Table 6: Percentage of style shifting per age

Variable	Older	Younger
(ei)	0.25	0.18
(oi)	0.44	0.22

Table 6 illustrates that for both of the variables the older speakers style shifted more than younger speakers. A likely explanation for this is that OM refused to do the formal component of the interview, and the only tokens elicited were from OF who had little formal training. Thus she carefully

read and articulated the tokens on the word list. The younger speakers had no concerns with the reading of the word list and in most cases they read very quickly, paying little attention to what they were actually reading.

Table 7: Percentage of style shifting per residency

Variable	Cappahayden	Conception Bay South
(e ₁)	0.22	0.16
(o ₁)	0.39	0.20

For both vocalic variables, residents of Cappahayden style-shifted more than the residents of CBS. This is an interesting finding, since the opposite might have been expected: the CBS residents have more pressure to conform from outside groups than their Cappahayden counterparts.

As in casual style, there was a great deal of interspeaker variability within each grouping with respect to (e₁) and (o₁) in formal style. This helps to clarify why group differences did not prove significant. The chief observation to be drawn is the considerable disparity between YM2 compared to the rest of the participants, including the other two younger males. In formal speech, YM2 uses the local variants of (e₁) and (o₁) categorically, while the other participants had fairly low usage frequencies. This result is quite surprising since his attitude scale results revealed only a fairly neutral attitude towards Cappahayden.

8. Discussion

In summary, age, gender and residency were not significant for (e₁) in casual style. However, in terms of the social variables females used the local variant of (e₁) less than males; likewise younger speakers used more of the supralocal variant than older speakers, as did the residents of Conception Bay South as compared to the Cappahayden residents. In addition, there was a great deal of interspeaker variability. As previously indicated, among the younger females the local variants of both variables were used more by YF2 than YF1. A likely explanation for this is that YF1 was my inside interviewer as well as a participant, thus by the end of the

interviews she was aware of the true purpose of the paper and adapted her speech accordingly. YF2, however, was totally oblivious to the true purpose of the study and as a result she was acting as naturally as possible. Another factor that undoubtedly played a role is local orientation: YF2 had a somewhat higher positive attitude towards Cappahayden than her sister did.

Interspeaker variability was less in evidence for the variable (o_i) than for (e_i), particularly in casual style, though none of the social factors of age, gender, and residency proved significant for either. Yet older speakers used the local variant of (o_i) more than younger speakers, and the Cappahayden residents used the local feature more than the CBS residents. It should be noted that unrounded pronunciations of (o_i) tend to be highly stigmatized in the province, and as a result the younger participants who also happen to be CBS residents are more aware of this, and tend to conform to the supralocal norm, especially in formal style. Nonetheless, in terms of gender the stigmatization of (o_i) was not reflected, since the majority of the participants, both male and female, produced the local variant of (o_i) 100% of the time in casual style. Only two participants (YF1 and YM3) produced some standard rounded variants of this token.

A possible explanation for this is that the speakers in Cappahayden – like the speakers on Smith Island, Maryland described by Schilling-Estes and Wolfram (1999) – may be heightening their linguistic distinctiveness. Thus, no matter where the speakers live or how old the speakers are, they are preserving an obvious feature of their local dialect in the face of encroaching supralocal norms. Another explanation lies in social network ties. Milroy (1980) noted that a person with a less close-knit social network is more likely to conform to the influences of the greater public since their network is less strong. However, those with close-knit ties are more likely to maintain the norms of their group. Each participant in this study maintains close network ties with their family. Participants who continue to reside in Cappahayden live next door to one another while, the CBS participants live only minutes apart and return to Cappahayden fairly regularly. Within the younger group, a possible reason as to why YF1 deviates from her sibling YF2 may be due to the fact that she has a greater range of ties outside of her Cappahayden social network, as well as the fact that she has married a man of German ethnicity. This is in contrast to YF2 who has married a man from the nearby community of Portugal Cove South. As to the three younger males, YM1's high use of local features undoubtedly derives from his continued residence in, and positive

orientation to, the community of Cappahayden, along with his working class status. Why the two younger male CBS residents (YM2 and YM3) should differ relates possibly to the fact that YM3's job takes him all over the province on a regular basis, and he may adapt his speech to fit his coworkers. YM2 is a bit of an anomaly, but the fact that he is the only one of the participants to either not reduce or to actually increase his usage of local variants in formal style, suggests a conscious effort on his part to identify with his original community of Cappahayden (a fact which, curiously did not emerge from the attitude measures).

My attempt to clarify usage differences in terms of attitude measures was not entirely helpful. Kerswill (1994) notes that it is very difficult to find a relationship between self-reported attitudes and language use. In this study the attitude scores clustered together. OM had the highest attitude score of 4.00, which indicates that he has positive attitudes towards Cappahayden; this clarifies his high usage of the local variants of [eɪ] in casual style. OF's attitude score was similar to that of her children, and even a little lower than some of theirs. The attitude scores provided some insight into the results for the two younger females. Although their social background is highly similar, their linguistic behaviour is quite different, with YF2 using more of the local forms than YF1. This may be due to the fact that YF2 has a more positive orientation to her community of origin. It is also interesting to note that in formal style YM2 used the local variants of [eɪ] and [oɪ] categorically, that is 100% of the time. A likely explanation for this is this participant's co-ownership of a business with other Cappahayden residents. Thus, he is in contact with residents of Cappahayden on a day-to-day basis. YM2 also appears to romanticize his speech and frequently use features that are characteristic of his original speech variety. In addition, YM2 is the youngest of the participants and as a result has not lived away from Cappahayden as long as the other participants who migrated to Conception Bay South.

9. Conclusion

In this small-scale familial sociolinguistic investigation of Cappahayden, it was shown that even though gender, age, and residency did not prove statistically significant, they do play a role in participants' linguistic behaviour. Nonetheless, considerable variability appears to exist within social groups. In both formal and informal style, my results

correspond to those of other Newfoundland studies for both gender and age. Thus the females in my study used more of the supralocal forms than did the males; and younger speakers likewise have adopted more supralocal features, particularly those who have moved away from the community as young adults. Style obviously affects the selection of the variants. Although the results were not dramatic, all the participants, with the exception of one, tended to use fewer of the local variants for both (ei) and (oi) in the reading of the word list as opposed to casual style.

Relative to the dialect endangerment models proposed by Schilling-Estes and Wolfram (1999) on the basis of their investigation of the moribund communities of Smith Island and Ocracoke, my study shows that the Cappahayden situation is much like the situation documented for Smith Island. Like Smith Island, Cappahayden has lost its main industry, fishing, and as a result many local residents are migrating to larger urban centres in search of employment; no outsiders are moving into Cappahayden. Interestingly, the outmigrants who have moved to Conception Bay South give some evidence of a 'concentration model,' in which residents heighten their linguistic distinctiveness in fear of losing their variety to supralocal forms. This may also be due to the strong social network and group solidarity that the Conception Bay South residents maintain with each other as well as with members who continue to reside in Cappahayden. Nonetheless, Schilling-Estes and Wolfram's dissipation model perhaps better characterizes the community from an overall perspective, in that younger generations are clearly not adhering to the same degree of use of local features as are their older counterparts.

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**III. Language Learning, Grammar Construction,
Tense and Aspect/
Apprentissage des langages, élaboration de la
grammaire, temps et aspect**

La grammaire interlinguistique des Acadiennes et des Acadiens bilingues pour les constructions moyennes

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1. Introduction

Cook (1991, 1992, 1993) soulève la question de la compétence finale quant à l'acquisition de la langue seconde sous la rubrique de ce qu'il appelle la multi-compétence, ce qu'il définit comme l'état d'esprit composé qui possède deux grammaires [intériorisées] ('the compound state of a mind with two grammars' 1991: 112). En se basant sur le concept de la compétence linguistique de Chomsky (1965), c'est-à-dire "la connaissance que le locuteur-auditeur a de sa langue" (1971:13), Cook a traité deux questions reliées: (1) les apprenants très avancés d'une langue seconde possèdent-ils les mêmes intuitions de la grammaticalité que les locuteurs natifs?; et (2) ces différences s'expliquent-elles par le fait que les deux grammaires intériorisées des bilingues s'influencent réciproquement?

Dans cet article, j'examinerai l'influence de l'anglais langue seconde chez les bilingues francophones en ce qui a trait aux constructions moyennes en français (*Le grec se traduit facilement*). Les constructions moyennes se prêtent bien à explorer la question de l'influence de la langue seconde sur la langue première parce que l'anglais et le français se différencient très spécifiquement en ce qui concerne ces constructions.

L'article s'organise comme suit: d'abord je présenterai certaines différences entre le français et l'anglais en ce qui concerne les constructions moyennes. Ensuite je décrirai une étude que j'ai effectuée en comparant les évaluations de la grammaticalité des constructions moyennes par les francophones bilingues et unilingues. Je présenterai les résultats de l'étude et les discuterai à la lumière des questions soulevées par l'hypothèse de la multi-compétence.

2. *Des certaines différences entre les constructions moyennes en français et en anglais*

Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz (1989) ont décrit plusieurs différences entre le français en l'anglais en ce qui concerne les constructions moyennes. D'abord, en français il y a un pronom clitique *se-moyen* dans les constructions moyennes (1a) tandis qu'en anglais il n'y a pas de pronom équivalent (*-self*) tel que démontré en (1b) et (1c). (L'astérisque indique que la phrase est agrammaticale.)

- (1) a. Le grec se traduit facilement.
 b. Greek translates easily.
 c. *Greek translates itself easily. (Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz 1989: 4)

Une deuxième différence entre les deux langues c'est qu'en français les constructions moyennes acceptent une diversité d'adverbiaux tandis qu'en anglais elles n'acceptent que les adverbiaux de facilité, c'est-à-dire les adverbiaux qui indiquent la facilité avec laquelle une certaine action peut être accomplie. La phrase (2a) est donc grammaticale, malgré le fait que l'équivalent anglais (2b) ne l'est pas.

- (2) a. Le grec se traduit avec un dictionnaire.
 b. *Greek translates with a dictionary. (Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz 1989: 10)

Une autre différence entre les deux langues: en français il est possible d'avoir les sujets impersonnels dans les constructions moyennes, de sorte que (3a) est grammatical tandis que l'équivalent en anglais (3b) ne l'est pas.

- (3) a. Il se traduit facilement beaucoup de textes grecs dans cette université.
 b. *There translate easily many Greek texts at this university. (Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz 1989: 12)

Une quatrième caractéristique qui distingue les deux langues en ce qui concerne les constructions moyennes: en français l'entité dans la position de sujet ne doit pas être affectée – c'est-à-dire changée ou modifiée par

l'action décrite par le verbe – mais en anglais l'entité dans la position de sujet doit être affectée. La phrase française en (4a) est donc grammaticale, mais l'équivalent en anglais (4b) est agrammaticale parce que l'entité dans la position du sujet – *the Eiffel Tower* – n'a pas été affectée par l'action du verbe.

- (4) a. La Tour Eiffel se voit facilement de ma fenêtre.
 b. *The Eiffel Tower sees easily from my window.
 (Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz 1989: 11)

Enfin, bien que Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz constatent que les constructions moyennes avec un Agent dans un syntagme prépositionnel avec *par* ne sont pas grammaticales en français moderne, Authier et Reed (1996) ont fourni des données qui démontrent bien qu'il existe des variétés de français parlé au Canada où de telles phrases sont grammaticales, comme en (5a). La traduction anglaise (5b) est agrammaticale.

- (5) a. Ce costume traditionnel se porte surtout par les femmes.
 b. *This traditional costume wears mostly by women.
 (Authier et Reed 1996: 4)

3. L'étude

3.1. La question de recherche

En me basant sur les différences entre les constructions moyennes en français et en anglais que je viens d'énumérer, je fais les prédictions suivantes. Si la langue seconde influence la langue première, les francophones bilingues devraient:

- accepter les constructions moyennes en français sans *se-moyen* parce qu'il n'y a pas de pronom dans les constructions équivalentes en anglais;
- ne pas accepter les constructions moyennes avec une diversité d'adverbiaux, avec un sujet impersonnel ou avec un syntagme prépositionnel en *par* en français parce que les équivalents sont agrammaticaux en anglais.

- ne pas accepter les constructions moyennes en français si l'entité dans la position de sujet n'est pas affectée parce que ce genre de phrase est agrammatical en anglais.

Des plus, si la langue seconde exerce une influence sur la langue première, les francophones bilingues devraient utiliser des constructions influencées par l'anglais dans les corrections de phrases qu'ils ont évaluées comme agrammaticales.

3.2. *Sujets*

Les sujets étaient des étudiantes et des étudiants à l'Université de Moncton, une université francophone au Nouveau-Brunswick. Dans le groupe bilingue il y avait sept étudiantes et cinq étudiants âge moyen de 21,3. Les deux parents étaient francophones, et la langue principale au foyer, à l'université et pendant des activités sociales, culturelles et athlétiques était le français.¹ J'ai exclu les sujets qui avaient étudié dans les écoles anglophones ou/et qui habituellement utilisaient l'anglais plus que le français. Le français était donc la langue dominante de tous les sujets. En ce qui concerne leur compétence en anglais, on les avait classés dans un cours très avancé en anglais à la suite d'une entrevue, les notes dans leur cours d'anglais en 12ième année (A ou B+ dans la Voie B),² ainsi qu'un exemple de leur production écrite en anglais, ce qui devait être presque sans erreur. Les treize sujets unilingues étaient huit étudiantes et cinq étudiants âge moyen de 19. Tous étaient au niveau haut débutant ou bas intermédiaire en anglais, le plus proche d'unilingue qu'on puisse trouver au Canada. Comme les bilingues, les deux parents des unilingues étaient francophones, et la langue principale au foyer, à l'université et pendant des activités sociales, culturelles et athlétiques était le français.

3.3. *Tâche expérimentale*

La tâche expérimentale se compose de 28 phrases: 22 sont grammaticales selon l'analyse de Fellbaum et Zribi-Hertz (1989) présenté plus haut; six sont agrammaticales parce qu'ils manquent le pronom clitique *se-moyen*. Les équivalents de toutes ces phrases, à l'exception de celles sans *se-moyen*, sont agrammaticaux en anglais. Les directives se trouvent en (6).

(6) **Directives** : Lisez les phrases suivantes. Mettez un ✓ entre les parenthèses à côté des phrases que vous jugez grammaticales. Mettez un ✕ entre les parenthèses à côté des phrases qui, à votre avis, NE SONT PAS grammaticales. Mettez un ? entre les parenthèses à côté des phrases où vous n'êtes pas certain. Pour toutes les phrases que vous avez marquées avec un ✕, fournissez une version correcte dans l'espace réservée à cet effet.

(1) La viande congèle bien, mais la laitue congèle mal. ()

4. Résultats

4.1. L'évaluation de la grammaticalité

Le tableau 1 (à la page suivante) présente le nombre et le pourcentage de phrases jugées 'grammaticales' par les unilingues et les bilingues selon le genre de phrase. En général on peut dire qu'il y a une différence de base entre les réponses des unilingues et des bilingues quant à leurs jugements: 52% grammaticaux pour les unilingues et 41% grammaticaux pour les bilingues. Cette différence est statistiquement significative ($\text{Chi}^2 = 26.2$; 2 d.l., $p. < 0.001$).

J'ai ensuite examiné chaque type de phrase séparément. Il y avait des différences significatives entre les deux groupes dans leurs jugements de trois types de phrase: ceux avec un sujet impersonnel (58% grammatical pour les unilingues et 31% pour les bilingues, $p. < 0.005$); ceux avec un sujet non affecté (88% grammatical pour les unilingues et 73% pour les bilingues, $p. < 0.025$); et enfin ceux avec un syntagme prépositionnel avec *par* (50% pour les unilingues et 33, 3% pour les bilingues, $p. < 0.025$). Dans tous ces cas les unilingues avaient une tendance statistiquement significative à juger les phrases grammaticales que les bilingues. Il n'y avait pas de différence significative entre les deux groupes dans leurs jugements des phrases sans adverbial de facilité (66% pour les unilingues et 64% pour les bilingues) ou dans les phrases sans *se-moyen* (8% et 3%).

Tableau 1: Jugements des unilingues et des bilingues par genre de phrase

Genre de phrase	Groupe	Grammaticale		Agrammaticale		Pas certain		TOTAL	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Sans <i>se-moyen</i>	Unilingue	6	(8)	71	(91)	1	(1)	78	(100)
	Bilingue	2	(3)	69	(96)	1	(1)	72	(100)
Sans adverbe de facilité	Unilingue	69	(66)	22	(21)	13	(13)	104	(100)
	Bilingue	61	(64)	34	(35)	1	(1)	96	(100)
Sujet impersonnel	Unilingue	30	(58)	18	(35)	4	(7)	52	(100)
	Bilingue	15	(31)	33	(69)	0	(0)	48	(100)
Sujet non affecté	Unilingue	46	(88)	3	(6)	3	(6)	52	(100)
	Bilingue	35	(73)	11	(23)	2	(4)	48	(100)
Syntagme <i>Par</i>	Unilingue	39	(50)	37	(47)	2	(3)	78	(100)
	Bilingue	24	(33.3)	48	(66.6)	0	(0)	72	(100)
TOTAL	Unilingue	190	(52)	151	(41)	23	(7)	364	(100)
	Bilingue	137	(41)	195	(58)	4	(1)	336	(100)

4.2. Les corrections

Le tableau 2 présente les genres de corrections qu'ont faites les deux groupes de sujets aux phrases qu'ils ont jugées agrammaticales. Comme le montre ce tableau, premièrement, les bilingues ont employé la voix passive plus fréquemment que les unilingues dans leurs corrections (7b) – 49% et 38% respectivement.

- (7) a. Original : Un tricot de laine se lave à l'eau froide.
 b. Correction : Un tricot de laine devrait être lavé à l'eau froide.

Tableau 2: Les corrections par genre de phrase

Genre de phrase	Groupe	Passif		Moyen		SVO		Autre		Total N
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Sans <i>se-moyen</i>	Unilingue	9	(13)	62	(87)	0	(0)	0	(0)	71
	Bilingue	7	(10)	63	(87.5)	1	(1)	1	(1)	72
Sans adverbe de facilité	Unilingue	14	(61)	1	(4)	4	(17)	4	(17)	23
	Bilingue	28	(82)	0	(0)	1	(3)	5	(15)	34
Sujet impersonnel	Unilingue	8	(44)	1	(6)	8	(44)	1	(6)	18
	Bilingue	19	(58)	0	(0)	13	(39)	1	(3)	33
Sujet non affecté	Unilingue	0	(0)	2	(40)	2	(40)	1	(20)	5
	Bilingue	2	(14)	3	(21)	7	(50)	2	(14)	14
Syntagme <i>Par</i>	Unilingue	26	(68)	1	(3)	8	(21)	3	(8)	38
	Bilingue	42	(88)	0	(0)	2	(4)	4	(8)	48
TOTAL	Unilingue	57	(38)	66	(44)	19	(12)	9	(6)	151
	Bilingue	98	(49)	66	(33)	23	(11)	14	(7)	201

Ces différences sont statistiquement significatives ($\text{Chi}^2 = 12,03$; 3 d.l., $p < 0.005$). Les bilingues ont donc utilisé la voix moyenne moins fréquemment dans leurs corrections: 33 % contre 44 % pour les unilingues.

- (8) a. Original : Les maisons préfabriquées se bâtissent rapidement par les charpentiers.
 b. Correction : Les maisons préfabriquées se construisent rapidement par les charpentiers.

Les deux groupes ont utilisé plus ou moins le même pourcentage de constructions SVO dans leurs corrections, 12% pour les unilingues et 11% pour les bilingues. J'ai donné un exemple d'une correction SVO en (9b).

- (9) a. Original : À partir du premier mars, il ne se vendra plus de cigarettes dans les pharmacies en Ontario.
 b. Correction : À partir du premier mars les pharmacies en Ontario ne vendront plus de cigarettes.

Les corrections avec des structures diverses ‘Autres’ sont moins nombreuses. J’ai donné des exemples de corrections avec *Se faire + Infinitif* (10b); *Facile/difficile à + Infinitif* (11b); et *Adjectif* (12b).

- (10) a. Original : Les maisons préfabriquées se bâtissent rapidement par les charpentiers.
 b. Correction : Les maisons préfabriquées se font bâtir rapidement par les charpentiers.
- (11) a. Original : Ce genre de nourriture se digère mal par les malades.
 b. Correction : Ce genre de nourriture est difficile à digérer pour les malades.
- (12) a. Original : La tour Eiffel se voit clairement de la fenêtre de mon hôtel.
 b. Correction : La tour Eiffel est très visible de la fenêtre de mon hôtel.

Les bilingues ont utilisé la même diversité de ressources linguistiques dans leurs corrections que les unilingues avec plus ou moins la même fréquence, 7 % pour les bilingues et 6 % pour les unilingues.

5. Discussion et conclusion

5.1. Jugements

J’avais prédit que les bilingues n’accepteraient pas certaines structures en français à cause de l’influence d’anglais, où ces structures sont agrammaticales. Cette prédiction a été partiellement confirmée, parce que le taux d’acceptation des constructions moyennes avec un sujet impersonnel, avec un sujet non affecté et avec un syntagme prépositionnel

avec *par* était moins élevé que celui des unilingues, à un seuil de signification de 0.025 à 0.005. On peut donc conclure que c'est l'influence de l'anglais qui a influencé les jugements des bilingues dans la langue première, parce que l'anglais a une grammaire beaucoup plus restreinte que le français en ce qui concerne les constructions moyennes. Le fait que ces trois types de phrase sont agrammaticaux en anglais aurait pu contribuer aux jugements plus conservateurs des bilingues.

Pourtant il n'y a pas eu de différence significative entre les deux groupes dans leurs jugements des phrases agrammaticaux sans *se-moyen*, malgré le fait que l'on s'attendrait à ce que les bilingues les accepteraient, étant donné que les phrases équivalentes en anglais sont grammaticales. J'ai donné un exemple de ce genre de phrase en (13).

- (13) a. *Les barbecues vendent bien pendant l'été.
b. Barbecues sell well during the summer.

Pourtant les bilingues ont jugé ce type de phrase comme agrammaticale presque tout le temps et dans 87.5% de leurs corrections ils ont ajouté *se-moyen*.

De plus, il n'y avait pas de différence significative entre les deux groupes dans leurs jugements des phrases sans adverbial de facilité, quoi que, s'il y a de l'influence de l'anglais, on s'attendrait à ce que les bilingues n'acceptent pas les phrases telles que (14), car en anglais un adverbial de facilité est obligatoire.

- (14) a. Un tricot de laine se lave à l'eau froide.
b. *A wool sweater washes in cold water.

Les résultats des jugements démontrent que même si il y a de l'influence de la langue seconde sur la langue première, cette influence n'est ni générale ni uniforme.

5.2. Corrections

Dans les corrections aux phrases qu'ils avaient jugées agrammaticales les bilingues ont utilisé un nombre significativement plus élevé de

structures passives que les unilingues. Ce fait confirme l'hypothèse présentée plus tôt que dans leurs corrections les bilingues devraient utiliser des constructions influencées par l'anglais.

Delisle (1993) a noté que la voix passive s'utilise en anglais et en français, mais qu'elle est beaucoup plus répandue en anglais. La sur-utilisation de la voix passive est très commune quand on fait une traduction de l'anglais vers le français, et il faut former les futurs traducteurs pour qu'ils puissent aller contre cette tendance naturelle (Spilka 1979, Delisle 1993, Vinay et Darbelnet 1995 par exemple). Cela n'est pas étonnant car pour faire la traduction il faut que les deux langues soient complètement activées et que le traducteur soit en mode bilingue.

Cependant, les bilingues dans la présente étude étaient en mode unilingue tout le long de l'expérience: ils étaient sur le campus d'une université francophone; l'assistant à la recherche leur a parlé exclusivement en français, et les directives et la tâche même étaient toutes en français. Étant donné que seule la langue première (le français) seraient activée dans un tel environnement, semblerait-il que la prédominance de la voix passive en anglais a eu une influence sur les grammaires intériorisées de la langue première des bilingues, et l'utilisation de la voix passive dans leurs corrections n'était pas due à l'interférence du temps réel de la langue seconde. Mais cette influence est plutôt question de préférence: l'influence de l'anglais a mène les bilingues vers l'utilisation de la voix passive au lieu de la voix moyenne pour supprimer l'Agent dans les phrases en français.

Seliger (1996: 605) a défini l'érosion linguistique ('*language attrition*') comme "la perte des aspects d'une langue première antérieurement acquise totalement comme résultat de l'acquisition d'une deuxième langue" ('*the loss of aspects of a previously fully acquired primary language resulting from the acquisition of another language*'). Il a suggéré que l'érosion linguistique n'est pas seulement un facteur dans la performance langagière mais qu'elle peut aussi se refléter dans les jugements de la grammaticalité. Selon Seliger, une différence entre les jugements des gens qui ont éprouvé l'érosion linguistique ('*attriters*') et les locuteurs natifs unilingues serait que ces premiers 'corrigerait' les phrases grammaticales.

Les bilingues dans la présente étude ont des jugements qui sont différents de ceux des unilingues: ils ont corrigé des phrases qui sont

n'ont rien perdu de la langue première. D'abord, ils étaient plus certains dans leurs jugements que les unilingues: 7 % réponses 'pas certain' pour les unilingues et seulement 1% pour les bilingues. (Je n'arrive pas à expliquer cette insécurité linguistique chez les unilingues.) Deuxièmement, dans leurs corrections les bilingues avaient utilisé les mêmes ressources linguistiques que les unilingues avec la même fréquence.

Mon étude appuie donc les suggestions de Cook (1992: 585): que chez les bilingues il y a une interaction mutuelle entre la connaissance de la langue première et de la langue seconde, et que la multi-compétence est un 'état d'esprit distinct' ('a distinct state of mind'). Cependant, bien que leur compétence linguistique serait différente, elle ne serait pas pour autant défectueuse.

Notes

1. Je tiens à remercier mes collègues Annette Boudreau et Lise Dubois, qui ont partagé avec moi leur questionnaire sur l'utilisation du français chez les jeunes Acadiens.
2. En reconnaissant la situation sociolinguistique au Nouveau-Brunswick le Ministère de l'Éducation offre deux programmes d'études en anglais langue seconde dans les écoles francophones de la province: la Voie A pour les élèves qui n'ont pas eu de l'expérience avec l'anglais, et la Voie B pour les élèves qui parlent couramment l'anglais avant de commencer à fréquenter l'école (Ministère de l'Éducation, 1992).

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Le signe linguistique dans l'interlangue: Le cas du français

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1. Introduction

Dans son *Cours de linguistique générale*, Saussure (1978:26) définit la langue comme “un système de signes distincts exprimant des idées distinctes.” Quant au signe, il le présente comme une entité linguistique à deux faces, unissant de façon arbitraire un signifiant, c'est-à-dire un objet linguistique du plan de l'expression, à un signifié, un objet linguistique du plan du contenu. La relation entre le signifiant et le signifié est purement arbitraire, conventionnel, immotivé et susceptible de s'altérer en raison d'événements extrinsèques ou intrinsèques à la langue. Par ailleurs, la valeur de chaque signe émane du système auquel il appartient, car chaque langue est un système *sui generis*. Autrement dit, chaque langue est un réseau autonome plus ou moins complexe d'oppositions et de différences.

Tous ces critères et bien d'autres, pour pertinents qu'ils soient, ne tiennent que si l'on choisit de considérer les langues comme des entités closes, rigoureusement structurées et imperméables. Ils ne s'appliquent qu'au signe linguistique ‘idéal,’ virtuel, d'une langue pure et homogène¹ et négligent le signe dans son fonctionnement réel, c'est-à-dire en tant qu'il interagit avec d'autres signes de la même langue ou d'une autre langue. Dans les lignes qui suivent, nous nous proposons d'analyser le signe linguistique tel qu'il se manifeste dans le contact des langues.

Avant d'entrer dans le vif du sujet et pour éviter d'errer entre les mots, nous allons commencer par définir dans quel(s) sens nous entendons le mot ‘interlangue.’

Le concept est très en vogue dans les milieux pédagogiques. Les didacticiens de la langue définissent par ce terme la langue ‘imparfaite’ que produit l'apprenant d'une langue seconde lors de l'apprentissage. Pour Ludi et Py (1986:119), l'interlangue est “l'ensemble des connaissances intermédiaires qu'un sujet a d'une langue seconde qu'il est en train d'apprendre.” Ces “connaissances intermédiaires” sont marquées par un “discours bilingue” (Ludi et Py 1986:139), sorte de parler hybride caractérisé par le “mélange de langues” (Ludi et Py 1986:140). Lightbown

et Spada (1993:55) quant à elles ne disent pas autre chose lorsqu'elles écrivent que l'interlangue est "the learner's developing second language knowledge. It may have characteristics of the learner's native language, characteristics of the second language, and some characteristics which seem to be very general and tend to occur in all or most interlanguage systems." À côté de cette définition pédagogique, il existe une définition purement sociolinguistique de l'interlangue. Selon celle-ci, l'interlangue, qui naît du contact entre les langues, est l'idiome mixte (parce qu'il présente des traits des deux langues en contact) pratiqué dans les milieux bilingues. C'est une réalité sociolinguistique dans la mesure où, comme les langues parlées dans les communautés unilingues, elle acquiert son autonomie et assure la communication interpersonnelle². À partir du moment où elle transcende l'individuel et se dote d'un statut social, dès lors qu'elle devient le moyen de communication d'un groupe et reçoit des affectations fonctionnelles, elle mérite d'être traitée comme une langue à part entière.

Qu'elle soit une réalité pédagogique ou une réalité sociolinguistique,³ l'interlangue naît toujours d'un contact entre les langues c'est-à-dire de l'utilisation alternée de deux ou de plusieurs langues par la même personne (Weinreich 1963). Au cours de cette utilisation alternée, les deux systèmes s'imbriquent, se contaminent, s'influencent mutuellement. C'est que, comme le note Martinet (1963), la présence dans le cerveau du même individu de plus d'une langue peut avoir des conséquences linguistiques et psychologiques parfois spectaculaires. En effet, étant donné que les langues sont des systèmes fermés, chaque langue constitue sinon un système à part entière, du moins un système entièrement à part. Le locuteur dit bilingue, en alternant les langues, oscille par conséquent d'un système à un autre. En d'autres termes, le bilingue exemplaire, si tant est que le bilinguisme parfait existe, serait, sur le plan linguistique, un équilibriste à califourchon sur deux systèmes qu'il manipule avec une aisance égale, en évitant toutes les formes d'interférences. Malheureusement, les choses sont loin de se passer toujours ainsi, et le contact des langues donne très souvent lieu à de nombreux amalgames, d'où l'émergence d'une langue hybride qu'on a appelé 'interlangue,' parce que située à l'intersection de deux langues. L'interlangue ne serait en définitive qu'une langue qui se développe à la frontière de deux langues, au point de contact de deux idiomes. Par son existence, elle donne raison à ceux qui rejettent la

possibilité pour un individu ou pour une société d'être complètement bilingue.

De fait, de l'avis de plusieurs linguistes et philosophes, le bilinguisme parfait est une utopie pédagogique, un impératif inatteignable. Hans Vogt (1953:369) par exemple se demande "s'il existe un bilinguisme total, à cent pour cent..." Merleau Ponty (cité par Van Overbeke 1978:9) soutient "qu'on peut parler plusieurs langues, mais qu'on ne vit qu'une seule parce qu'on n'appartient jamais qu'à un seul monde." C'est la même idée qui apparaît en filigrane dans ces propos d'André Martinet (1960:16,25): "A chaque langue correspond une organisation particulière des données de l'expérience [...] Une langue est un instrument de communication selon laquelle l'expérience humaine s'analyse différemment dans chaque communauté." Par conséquent, parler plusieurs langues c'est habiter plusieurs mondes, c'est être capable d'organiser et d'exprimer les mêmes expériences de façons différentes. Dans la théorie comme dans la pratique, ce double objectif paraît hors de portée. C'est pourquoi la langue seconde produite par un locuteur ou un apprenant n'est le plus souvent qu'une langue 'marginale' dans la mesure où elle comporte généralement des traits (phoniques, graphiques, syntaxiques, sémantiques) qui trahissent son appartenance à une autre communauté linguistique et qui distinguent son énoncé de celui des locuteurs natifs.

À l'opposé de ces vues pessimistes sur le bilinguisme développées par les linguistes et les philosophes, nous avons les opinions formulées par les pédagogues. Ces derniers voient dans le bilinguisme un processus dynamique, qui, pour n'être pas parfait, n'en demeure pas moins perfectible. Selon eux, l'interlangue n'est qu'une étape intermédiaire dans le complexe processus d'acquisition de la langue seconde. Le trait caractéristique de cette étape est le mélange involontaire des langues, mélange qui traduit l'opération d'apprentissage en marche.

La frontière entre la définition pédagogique et la définition sociolinguistique est difficile à cerner, et le terme 'interlangue' est employé par les didacticiens et les linguistes pour renvoyer respectivement à la langue mixte de l'apprenant et à la langue pénétrée d'interférences parlée dans une communauté bilingue. Seulement, dans ce deuxième cas, l'interlangue est un idiome autonome ou en voie de l'être et est capable de médiatiser la communication entre les membres d'une communauté. Dans

cette étude, nous emploierons le vocable interlangue à la fois au sens de réalité pédagogique (l'interlangue de l'apprenant), et au sens de réalité sociolinguistique (la langue mixte parlée dans une communauté bilingue).

L'interlangue de l'apprenant d'une langue seconde résulte le plus souvent de la confusion que ce dernier fait entre l'apprentissage d'une langue et l'apprentissage du lexique. À ces débuts, le jeune bilingue croit qu'il suffit d'apposer de nouveaux signifiants aux concepts déjà connus pour produire des énoncés compréhensibles et acceptables dans la langue seconde. Martinet (1960:12) conteste cette vue simpliste et met les locuteurs des langues en garde contre la tentation naïve de réduire l'apprentissage d'une langue à celui des mots. "Apprendre une autre langue, ce n'est pas mettre de nouvelles étiquettes sur des objets connus, mais s'habituer à analyser autrement ce qui fait l'objet de la communication linguistique." L'observation des phrases qui suivent confirme la justesse de la remarque de Martinet. Les phrases, tirées des copies d'étudiants (niveau débutant et niveau intermédiaire), des émissions radiodiffusées et du *Dictionnaire québécois français* sont toutes plus ou moins acceptables⁴ bien que grammaticalement correctes.

CORPUS

1. a. *Comment ça va? Je suis bien*
b. *How are-you? I'm well*
2. a. *Avez-vous des enfants? Comment vieux sont-ils?*
b. *Do you have children? How old are they?*
3. a. *Quelle est la France comme?*
b. **What is France like?**
4. a. *J'ai des questions à demander avant je quitte.*
b. *I have questions to ask before I leave.*
5. a. *Est-ce que vous pouvez me prendre au restaurant?*
b. *Can you take me to the restaurant?*
6. a. *Je vais voler à ma ville natale sur jeudi.*
b. *I will fly to my hometown on Thursday.*
7. a. *Je manque la neige.*
b. *I miss the snow.*
8. a. *J'entends de toi.*
b. *I am hearing from you.*
9. a. *Je ne peux pas attendre pour ta réponse.*
b. *I can't wait for your answer.*

10. a. *J'ai réussi à **sauver** un mille dollars.*
b. *I was able to **save** a thousand dollars.*
11. a. *La commission a **mis de l'avant** certaines propositions.*
b. *The commission **put forward** some proposals.*
12. a. *Un déménageur **charge** 120\$ le 1^{er} juillet.*
b. *A moving company **charges** \$120 on July 1st.*
13. a. *Voulez-vous du café ? **Définitivement.***
b. *Would you like some coffee ? **Definitely.***
14. a. *Nous avons étudié les variables **reliées** à la banque et aux clients.*
b. *We studied variables **related** to the bank and to the customers.*

Le trait commun à toutes ces phrases est sans aucun doute leur ton anglais, en dépit de leur coloration française. Par conséquent elles n'appartiennent ni à l'anglais (les signifiants utilisés sont français), ni au français (les signifiés sont anglais), mais baignent dans une zone grise d'interférences. Ceci nous conduit à notre première observation, à savoir que dans l'interlangue le signe linguistique occupe un espace médian dans lequel le lien entre le signifiant et le signifié éclate et cède la place à un signe écartelé entre deux systèmes. Aussi, peut-on comprendre les signifiants de ces phrases, mais il faut une connaissance de la langue anglaise pour être en mesure de comprendre les signifiés et à plus forte raison les sens des phrases.

Mais quelle est la source de ces confusions? Pourquoi ces amalgames? La réponse à cette double question passe par un examen des rapports entre l'interlangue et la pensée. Pour cette première partie, nous considérerons l'interlangue surtout du point de vue pédagogique puisqu'elle représente l'effort conscient que l'apprenant fournit dans sa tentative de produire des énoncés dans la langue seconde. Comme nous le verrons dans les lignes qui suivent, la nature des erreurs commises jette une lumière sur le mécanisme cognitif qui précède la production des énoncés en même temps qu'elle permet de déceler les liens qui unissent l'interlangue et la pensée.

2. Rapport entre la pensée et le signe dans l'interlangue

L'une des fonctions intrinsèques de la langue est de servir de miroir à la pensée, de lui donner forme et vie. Les linguistes ont depuis longtemps

perçu l'inséparabilité de la langue et de la pensée. La langue permet d'exprimer la pensée et la pensée à son tour influe sur le comportement linguistique. C'est bien à cette inséparabilité que Saussure (1978:157) fait allusion quand il assimile la langue à une feuille de papier dont "la pensée est le recto et le son le verso." Les bilingues ou les apprenants de langue seconde qui ont deux langues ont-t-ils/elles, pour ainsi dire, deux modes de pensée correspondants aux deux systèmes de sons propres à chacune des langues qu'ils/elles emploient? Poser cette question revient à se demander dans quelle langue l'apprenant d'une langue seconde pense son discours. Est-ce dans sa langue maternelle ou dans la langue seconde? Ou encore dans les deux?

L'analyse des phrases mixtes produites par l'apprenant d'une langue seconde permet d'affirmer que dans l'interlangue, la pensée est inféodée à la langue maternelle. Le locuteur doit d'abord formuler sa pensée dans une langue (sa langue maternelle), ensuite, la traduire mentalement et rapidement dans la langue seconde, avant de la verbaliser. Ce rapide et sinueux processus mental explique l'origine des calques structuraux et des interférences lexicales. Les phrases (1 à 9) sont des illustrations parfaites de cette opération de transcodage mental. Au lieu de dire par exemple *La neige me manque* (phrase 7), ce locuteur, qui a d'abord pensé à la phrase anglaise *I miss the snow*, a ensuite aveuglement rapproché les signifiants des deux codes pour produire la phrase hybride *Je manque la neige*. Si cette phrase est sémantiquement inacceptable, il en va tout autrement de la phrase (1) qui n'est incorrecte que par rapport au contexte. En effet, répondre *je suis bien* à la question *Comment ça va?* est inexacte par rapport au contexte, et l'on peut, pour qui connaît la langue anglaise, aisément deviner la phrase dont elle est le transcodage, *I am well*.

Bref, dans l'interlangue de l'apprenant, la pensée du locuteur est encore sous l'emprise des structures linguistiques de sa première langue. Il est obligé chaque fois de passer par la langue maternelle pour pouvoir conceptualiser, concevoir, se représenter les expériences à communiquer. La langue seconde semble être hors du champ de la pensée immédiate. C'est pourquoi les phrases produites dans cette seconde langue arrivent toujours altérées, transcodées, bref dégageant une forte odeur de traduction le plus souvent ratée. Rappelons que ce caractère s'applique bien à l'interlangue définie pédagogiquement.⁵

3. *Interlangue, motivation et mutabilité du signe*

L'une des grandes innovations de Saussure est d'avoir énoncé avec autorité le caractère arbitraire du rapport qui unit le signifiant au signifié. Mais ce caractère arbitraire du signe doit être manié avec prudence quand on parle des langues et surtout de l'interlangue. Saussure lui-même avait déjà eu la prudence de relever la nature non dogmatique du concept en incluant dans son cours la notion d' 'arbitraire relatif.' Ce bémol lui permet de reconnaître que le lexique d'une langue comporte des éléments purement conventionnels et des éléments motivés. Dans l'interlangue, les signes paraissent motivés au moins dans la mesure où leur choix est dicté par la langue maternelle de l'apprenant et son désir de trouver des synonymes interlinguistiques aux signes déjà connus.

La motivation la plus frappante dans l'interlangue est la motivation sémantique. Ainsi, si dans la langue anglaise *to charge*, phrase (12), est immotivé par rapport à la réalité qu'il désigne, en revanche, dans la phrase française correspondante, la valeur de *charge* découle directement de son vis-à-vis anglais, c'est-à-dire que le locuteur l'a choisi en pensant au mot anglais *to charge*. Par conséquent, on ne peut plus parler du caractère purement arbitraire de ce dernier puisque le lien qui unit le signifiant au signifié dans ce contexte particulier paraît motivé par la connaissance que le locuteur a déjà du mot. Contrairement à la valeur du signe saussurien, disons que la valeur de *charger* est donnée à l'avance.⁶ Elle n'émane pas du système ou de l'intersystème dont le signe fait partie, mais découle d'un système préexistant, le système anglais. C'est pourquoi l'appréhension du sens de la phrase française exige de l'interlocuteur une connaissance de la langue anglaise. La motivation sémantique du signe, qui illustre la contagion d'un système par un autre, est une manifestation irréfutable de la mutabilité du signe. En d'autres termes, dans l'interlangue, le signe est en pleine mutation. Il subit les timides tentatives de changement que lui infligent, parfois inconsciemment, les locuteurs bilingues. D'ailleurs l'interlangue n'est-elle pas un excellent poste d'observation de la nature dynamique du signe? C'est précisément cette idée qu'on retrouve déjà chez Meillet, cité par Van Overbeke (1978:10). Selon Meillet, quand on analyse l'évolution d'une langue, il est important "de prendre en considération une période de bilinguisme durant laquelle l'ancienne et la nouvelle langue sont employées simultanément par des locuteurs déterminés." Cette idée sera renforcée par Martinet qui soutient que (1960:171) "le contact de langue est

important lorsqu'il s'agit de rendre compte de la façon dont les langues changent dans le temps."

4. La relation signifiant-signifié dans l'interlangue

La linguistique structurale a indiqué que la relation entre les systèmes linguistiques n'est pas toujours symétrique, c'est-à-dire que les signifiants et les signifiés d'une langue ne parallélisent pas point par point ceux de l'autre. Chaque langue a sa propre structure lexicale, son propre système de signifiants et de signifiés qui ne correspond pas point par point à ceux de l'autre. Ce manque de concordance entre les systèmes de signifiants et

Tableau 1⁷

Unités linguistiques	Signifiants	Signifiés et sens	Remarques
1. <i>Comment ça va?</i> <i>Je suis bien.</i>	Français	Anglais-français	Cette phrase peut se rencontrer en français mais dans des contextes différents.
2. <i>Comment vieux sont-ils?</i>	Français	Anglais	Transcodage mental
3. <i>Quelle est la France comme?</i>	Français	Anglais	Transcodage mental
4. <i>J'ai des questions à demander avant que je quitte.</i>	Français	Anglais	Confusion entre les signifiés de <i>demander</i> et <i>ask</i> + transcodage
5. <i>Est-ce que vous pouvez me prendre au restaurant?</i>	Français	Anglais	Confusion entre les signifiés de <i>prendre</i> et <i>take</i>

10. <i>J'ai réussi à sauver un mille dollars.</i>	Français	Anglais	Confusion entre les signifiés de <i>sauver</i> et <i>save</i>
6. <i>Je vais voler à ma ville natale sur jeudi.</i>	Français	Anglais	Transcodage mental
11. <i>La commission a mis de l'avant certaines propositions.</i>	Français	Anglais	Traduction littérale de <i>put forward</i> .
12. <i>Un déménageur charge 120\$ le 1^{er} juillet.</i>	Français	Anglais	Confusion entre les signifiés de <i>charge</i> et <i>charge</i> .
13. <i>Voulez-vous du café? Définitivement.</i>	Français	Anglais	Confusion entre les signifiés de <i>definitely</i> et <i>définitivement</i> .
14. <i>Nous avons étudié les variables reliés.</i>	Français	Anglais	Confusion entre les signifiés de <i>related to</i> et <i>reliés</i>
7. <i>Je manque la neige.</i>	Français	Anglais	Transcodage mental
8. <i>J'entends de toi.</i>	Français	Anglais	Transcodage mental
9. <i>Je ne peux pas attendre pour ta réponse.</i>	Français	Anglais	Transcodage mental

de signifiés des diverses langues expliquent en grande partie pourquoi les phrases du corpus sont plus ou moins acceptables du point de vue de la norme du français. D'une façon générale, dans l'interlangue, le signifiant

et le signifié sont empruntés aux deux langues en présence comme l'illustre le Tableau 1.

En investissant dans les signifiants français les signifiés des signifiants anglais, ces locuteurs bouleversent les rapports traditionnels et conventionnels qui existent ou doivent exister entre les deux faces complémentaires du signe. La nouvelle relation que cette mixité crée peut être schématiquement représentée comme suit:

15. Anglais/ *exemple: épargner*
 Français/ *exemple: sauver*

Il convient de noter que cette relation particulière entre le signifiant et le signifié dans l'interlangue est totalement tributaire du contexte. En d'autres termes, le lien entre le signifiant et le nouveau signifié qu'on essaie de lui greffer est tellement lâche que ce dernier ne peut pas subsister tout seul dans la mémoire. Dans chaque langue impliquée dans l'interlangue par contre, la relation entre les signifiants subsiste même en dehors des contextes particuliers. Le signifiant appelle automatiquement le signifié en contexte ou hors contexte. Ainsi par exemple, *sauver* n'a le sens d'*épargner* que dans le contexte précis de l'interlangue. Dans la langue française par contre, il a comme signifié minimum (sème) constant, et courant *mettre hors de danger*. Comme nous allons le voir à présent, cette modification du lien entre signifiant et signifié a des répercussions sur la valeur du signe et sur le schéma classique de la communication.

5. *Interlangue et valeur des signes*

Saussure (1978:159) fait remarquer que dans la langue, "il n'y a que des différences" puisque la langue est un "système dont tous les termes sont solidaires et où la valeur de l'un ne résulte que de la présence simultanée des autres." En d'autres termes, la valeur de chaque signe émane du système auquel ce signe appartient et est définie par opposition aux autres signes du système touchant à la même réalité. Nous proposons qu'on appelle cette valeur qui émane du système 'valeur intralinguistique,' c'est-à-dire construite par opposition aux signes concurrents touchant à la même notion à l'intérieur de la même langue. Ainsi, chacun des termes suivants jouit d'une valeur 'intralinguistique':

16. Français	Anglais
<i>sauver</i>	<i>save</i>
<i>racheter</i>	<i>rescue</i>
<i>sauvegarder</i>	<i>safeguard</i>
<i>mettre en sûreté</i>	<i>spare</i>
	<i>store away</i>

Dans la double série des termes ci-dessus, on note une délimitation réciproque des aires sémantiques. Aussi, la caractéristique de *sauver* dans le système français par exemple est-il d'être ce que *racheter*, *sauvegarder*, et *mettre en sûreté* ne sont pas. De la même manière, le terme anglais *to save* ne tire sa valeur que de l'existence de ses concurrents.

Dans l'interlangue par contre, à cause des diverses formes d'interférences, les signes peuvent acquérir des valeurs '*interlinguistiques*.' Plus clairement, la valeur d'un terme peut être délimitée, voire dérivée non plus des termes concurrents appartenant au même système, mais des termes concurrents émanant de l'autre système linguistique du bilingue. Ce contact entre les valeurs des signes peut être à l'origine d'un enrichissement sémantique du terme. C'est d'ailleurs au vu de cette réalité que Saussure (1978:160) remarque qu' "il y a des termes qui s'enrichissent par contact avec les autres." Mais pour Saussure, il s'agit bien d'un enrichissement sémantique dû au contact syntagmatique ou paradigmatic entre les unités d'un même système. Dans l'interlangue par contre, l'enrichissement sémantique, qu'on pourrait aussi appeler 'contagion sémantique,' se fait par le contact d'une unité linguistique avec une unité d'une autre langue. Cette contagion sémantique explique pourquoi le locuteur de la phrase (10) emploie le verbe *sauver* au sens d' *épargner*, lui attribuant ainsi l'un des synonymes du verbe anglais *to save*. La valeur de *sauver* dans ce cas ne découle pas de ses concurrents français, dans la mesure où *épargner* ne figure pas dans la série synonymique du verbe *sauver* en français, mais plutôt du système anglais avec lequel il coexiste. Cette attraction sémantique peut être schématiquement représentée comme suit:

17.		Français	Anglais
{	↙ ↘	<i>sauver</i>	<i>save</i>
		<i>racheter</i>	<i>rescue</i>
		<i>sauvegarder</i>	<i>safeguard</i>
		<i>mettre en sûreté</i>	<i>spare</i>
			<i>store away</i>

La modification de la valeur sémantique de *sauver* peut s'expliquer par le phénomène de l'attraction sémantique représentée ici par la flèche – attraction sémantique facilitée par la proximité phonique des termes *sauver* et *save*, leurs polysémies respectives qui se recoupent en certains points et le fait que les deux mots sont susceptibles de figurer dans les mêmes contextes dans les deux langues. Il existe en effet des cas où *sauver* et *save* sont directement interchangeables comme par exemple dans la phrase *My dog saved my life* qui peut très bien être rendue littéralement par *Mon chien a sauvé ma vie*. Dans les deux emplois, on retrouve l'idée de *faire échapper à un danger*. *Racheter* et *rescue*, *sauvegarder* et *safeguard* sont également interchangeables dans certains contextes. Mais quand on pousse un peu plus loin l'analyse lexicologique des deux termes (c'est-à-dire *sauver* et *save*), on se rend compte que le terme anglais comporte deux nuances de sens *to spare*, *to store*, qui n'existent pas dans la série synonymique de son vis-à-vis français. La présence de ces deux nouvelles nuances de sens dans le signifiant anglais et l'inexistence de ces mêmes nuances dans le signifiant français modifie la valeur du verbe anglais, et partant, limite les contextes de son échangeabilité avec le terme français *sauver*. Les locuteurs bilingues, qui n'ont pas toujours conscience de cette complexité de la réalité linguistique, tentent inconsciemment de corriger ce déséquilibre en attribuant au terme français un nouveau sens, celui d'*épargner*. Ils le font notamment en employant *sauver* au sens de *to spare* d'où la phrase (10). En attendant qu'*épargner* soit reconnu et institutionnalisé⁸ par les lexicographes comme faisant partie du champ sémantique de *sauver*, ce dernier n'aura pour le moment qu'une valeur interlinguistique, c'est-à-dire que les termes auxquels il s'oppose et desquels il tire sa valeur ne sont pas dans le système français, mais anglais. Aussi pouvons-nous affirmer que dans l'interlangue, le signe a une valeur interlinguistique.

Les termes *charger* et *définitivement*, qui dans les contextes où ils sont utilisés ici sont considérés comme des anglicismes, ont également des

valeurs 'interlinguistiques.' Sur le plan sémantique, ils sont respectivement influencés par leurs équivalents anglais *to charge* et *definitely*.

Ces quelques exemples démontrent à l'évidence le rôle capital que le contact des langues joue dans la mutation des signes et dans l'évolution des langues.

6. *Interlangue et communication*

La linguistique a indiqué que dans tout processus communicationnel, la démarche du locuteur est de nature *onomasiologique* en ce sens qu'il va des concepts à exprimer vers les formes pouvant les exprimer. L'acte de communication est donc d'abord un acte psychique avant d'être linguistique (vocal ou écrit) et physique. Selon Pottier (1992) la communication linguistique est une démarche comprenant trois étapes à savoir: la mise en scène, la mise en signe et la mise en chaîne. Mais ce qui fait la spécificité de la communication dans l'interlangue (ici nous pensons à l'interlangue pris au sens pédagogique) est que la langue de 'la mise en scène,' c'est-à-dire la langue de conceptualisation est différente de la langue de la 'mise en chaîne,' c'est-à-dire de la langue de verbalisation. Le schéma suivant résume les séquences successives qui conduisent à la construction du sens dans l'interlangue.

Tableau 2

Conceptualisation en L1 Verbalisation en L2 →	Verbalisation mental en L1 →	Traduction mentale en L2 →	Verbalisation en L2 →
<i>anglais</i>	<i>anglais</i>	<i>français</i>	<i>français</i>
Mise en scène →	Mise en signe 1	Mise en signe 2	Mise en chaîne

Ainsi, le locuteur associe, par confusion, les signifiés d'une langue aux formes linguistiques d'une autre langue. Ce faisant, il trouble le schéma classique de la communication dans la mesure où il bouleverse le rapport

entre le signifiant et le signifié des langues en présence. Si, pour construire le sens, le locuteur déploie une double compétence linguistique, l'interlocuteur doit, pour le saisir, déployer également une double compétence linguistique, ce que Martinet (1960 :147) appelle "une compétence bilingue." Grâce à celle-ci, il peut, par retraduction⁹, retrouver et comprendre le sens de la phrase de base¹⁰ manifestée en surface sous une forme hybride. Sa démarche, qui est de nature *sémasiologique*, exige cette "gymnastique intellectuelle" (Delisle 1980:39), ce bref détour vers la langue sous-jacente¹¹. Nous représenterons son parcours comme suit:

Tableau 3

Déverbalisation 1 →	Sens 1 →	Déverbalisation 2/Retraduction →	Sens 2 →
français		anglais	
(Signes patents →	Sens littéral →	Signes latents →	Vouloir-dire)

Ainsi par exemple, pour retrouver le sens de la phrase *Je ne peux pas attendre pour ta réponse*, il faut remonter, par retraduction, à la phrase anglaise *I can't wait for your answer*. En effet, l'addition des signifiés de la phrase française aboutit à un non-sens.

La communication interlinguistique vient réaffirmer le postulat plusieurs fois répété par les sémanticiens, postulat selon lequel le sens d'un énoncé n'est pas égal à la somme des quanta d'informations portées par les unités qui le composent. Le parcours menant au sens dans l'interlangue est une preuve supplémentaire de cet axiome linguistique.

Ignorer la réalité de l'interlangue peut conduire à de graves incompréhensions, de fâcheux contresens, des situations parfois cocasses, bref, il peut être à l'origine des ratés dans la communication. Ainsi, Ullmann (1952:208) cite-il l'exemple d'une touriste anglaise qui interpelle un chauffeur de taxi francophone et lui demande s'il est fiancé (*Are you engaged?*).

7. Conclusion

De nos jours, l'interlangue n'est plus une simple réalité pédagogique éphémère, dynamique et changeante. Dans les contextes bilingues, elle s'infiltré dans tous les actes de la communication courante au point où les médias, les enseignants, les apprenants, les écrivains, les traducteurs, bref, la société dans son ensemble s'en sert parfois sans pour autant la considérer comme telle. Avec le contact du genre humain et des langues, nous vivons ce que Vinay et Darbelnet (1967:34) nomment une "période de relâchement linguistique" marquée par la prédominance de la norme d'usage sur le bon usage. Le message prend une place exagérée par rapport au code, et on se soucie moins de bien parler que de se faire bien comprendre. Aussi, est-il peut-être sur le plan de la communication, plus efficace de dire (au Canada) *Veillez élaborer* au lieu de *Veillez donner plus de détails*. Apprécier quelque chose en disant *c'est fun* paraît plus vivant que l'expression française *c'est amusant*, le mot *fun* recouvrant des réalités et des connotations par ailleurs inexistantes dans le mot français. La fréquence et le nombre sans cesse croissant de ces formes hybrides dans le parler quotidien des bilingues français-anglais est un témoignage de la dynamique de convergence inhérente à toute situation de contact linguistique. Sur un registre plus inquiétant, ce mélange de langues est, au niveau sociolinguistique, un signe avant-coureur de la mort de l'une des langues. C'est cette idée que Garmadi (1981:163) résume admirablement quand elle écrit:

En conséquence d'un contact étroit et de passages incessants d'une langue à l'autre, l'interférence peut prendre des proportions suffisantes pour qu'il n'y ait plus dans le discours des bilingues une seule phrase complète ni même un segment d'énoncé (...) attribuables à l'une des deux langues en présence. La distinction entre les langues s'effondre et il est alors possible de concevoir le résultat de l'interférence comme le remplacement graduel d'un système par l'autre.

L'étude du signe dans l'interlangue permet de démontrer ce mécanisme de remplacement graduel et de démontrer comment il s'opère au niveau du signifiant et du signifié. C'est pourquoi dans l'interlangue, le signe comporte des caractéristiques qui le démarquent du signe linguistique

saussurien conçu, lui, dans une perspective structurale fermée. Parce que l'activité interlinguistique se situe à la lisière de deux langues, elle déborde nécessairement le cadre édicté par Saussure et se dote de ses caractéristiques propres. Toutefois, même si cette analyse montre quelques limites des critères du signe saussurien, elle permet en même temps de donner raison à Saussure et de se rendre compte de la pertinence de sa définition de la langue, à savoir que celle-ci est toujours structure ou ensemble de structures. C'est bien parce qu'elle est structure que tout transcodage mental des éléments d'une langue dans une autre débouche sur des formes hybrides. C'est parce qu'elle est structure que les signifiants et les signifiés de deux langues ne se recoupent pas et ne se recouvrent pas. Et le mérite du maître de Genève est bien d'avoir relevé ce caractère fondamental.

Notes

1. Reconnaissons tout de même que la décision de faire provisoirement abstraction de la langue telle qu'elle se réalise en discours était dictée par la complexité du fait linguistique et la nécessité d'élaborer des méthodes de recherche rigoureuses. Comme l'a si bien vu Martinet (1963:VII) dans sa préface de *Languages in Contact* de Uriel Weinreich,

There was a time when the progress of research required that each community should be considered linguistically self-contained and homogeneous [...] It certainly was a useful assumption. By making investigators blind to a large number of actual complexities, it has enabled scholars from the founding fathers of our science down to the functionalists and structuralists of today to abstract a number of fundamental problems, to present for them solutions perfectly valid in the frame of the hypothesis, and generally to achieve perhaps for the first time, some rigor in a research involving man's psychic activity.

2. Maurice Pergnier (1993:254) fait remarquer que "les interlangues deviennent des réalités sociolinguistiques à partir du moment où, comme les langues elles-mêmes, elles s'instituent indépendamment des

actes de communication réels qui leur donnent naissance et deviennent autonomes par rapport à eux.”

3. Dans son étude des interférences, Weinreich (1963:11) distingue entre les interférences de parole et les interférences de langue avec cette comparaison éclairante: “In speech, interference is like sand carried by a stream; in language, it is the sedimented sand deposited on the bottom of a lake.” Ainsi, l’interlangue, d’abord ‘grains de sables épars,’ ne devient réalité sociolinguistique que par sédimentation sociale.
4. Les phrases (10,11,12,13,et 14) ne se retrouvent pas seulement dans l’interlangue des apprenants, mais aussi dans la communication courante. Du point de vue normatif, elles sont acceptables ou inacceptables selon l’idée plus ou moins grande qu’on se fait du concept de l’acceptabilité.
5. Si nous trouvons nécessaire de le rappeler, c’est que ce parcours sinueux de la conceptualisation à la verbalisation ne s’applique pas à l’interlangue considérée comme réalité sociolinguistique. En effet, dans ce deuxième cas, le cerveau du bilingue fonctionne comme celui de l’unilingue, c’est-à-dire qu’il associe directement les idées aux signes sans passer par une langue intermédiaire.
6. Dans son *Cours*, Saussure indique que les valeurs des signes ne sont jamais données à l’avance. Elles émanent du système auquel le signe appartient.
7. Le signe étant une notion très élastique, nous le prenons ici au sens de mots, de syntagmes, ou de phrases. C’est pourquoi dans chaque cas, le signe qui nous intéresse est imprimé en gras.
8. Sauver est déjà presque institué par la pratique sociale comme synonyme d’*épargner*. Il ne reste plus aux lexicographes qu’à le constater et à le mettre dans le dictionnaire. C’est ce qui s’est passé avec le verbe *réaliser*, désormais employé au sens de ‘se rendre compte.’ Ce sens a été pendant longtemps considéré comme un anglicisme. Aujourd’hui les dictionnaires français ont consacré ce nouveau sens que l’usage avait institué depuis longtemps. Et c’est dans le contact avec l’anglais qu’est née cette nouvelle polysémie.

9. Nous employons le terme 'retraduction' à dessein pour montrer que le produit de l'énonciation, étant déjà le résultat d'une traduction mentale, ne peut être compris que si le locuteur, ayant identifié la langue qui interfère, retraduit l'énoncé dans celle-ci pour remonter à la structure profonde de la phrase. Ce n'est que grâce à cette opération qu'il peut accéder au vouloir-dire du locuteur.

10. Pour les générativistes, la compréhension d'une phrase passe par une connaissance préalable de la phrase noyau dont elle est issue. Chomsky (1969:101) soutient que "le problème général d'une analyse de processus de compréhension est réduit, en un sens, à l'explicitation de la manière dont les phrases noyaux sont comprises, celles-ci étant considérées comme 'éléments de contenu' de base à partir desquels on forme par développement transformationnel les phrases plus complexes."

11. La sémantique a démontré que pour comprendre le sens d'un énoncé, il faut d'abord que l'interlocuteur y reconnaisse une phrase de la langue. Or le locuteur français unilingue aura du mal à considérer spontanément ces phrases comme faisant partie du répertoire français, et partant à les comprendre, d'où la nécessité de recourir à la langue anglaise.

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Parametric Mapping within the Minimalist Program

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1. *Introduction*

First language acquisition theory has been undergoing a fundamental change since the introduction of the Minimalist Program (MP) (Chomsky 1992). Before the MP, acquisition models were based upon parameter setting, the inclusion of one possible phenomenon (or phenomena)-specific rule (parameter setting) within the adult grammar to the exclusion of all other possible rules relating to that particular phenomenon(a). With the introduction of the MP, the locus of inter-language variation changed from the syntactic rule-base to the lexicon (with the MP calling for an invariant syntax). However, just how a wide range of variation could be accounted for solely within the lexicon was not fully explained. This left the field of acquisition theory, which has as its target the adult syntax, somewhat challenged as it tried to realize both what the final target should be and how the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) could adequately achieve that target within the newly specified constraints of the proposal. Over time a number of lexically-based proposals were put forward, generally based on how lexical feature information was initially interpreted (e.g., Wexler 1994, Phillips 1995) or acquired (LeBlanc 2001, 2002). Being lexically-based, these proposals tended to concentrate on phenomena that had been problematic under the parameter setting model: phenomena that exhibited patterns of gradual (i.e. non-discrete) change from one behaviour to another (null subjects and Root Infinitives (RIs) being the classic examples). But, there are behaviours that naturally lend themselves to a discrete process like parameter setting or principle inclusion – verb movement comes immediately to mind. This phenomenon varies cross-linguistically, yet children seem to have immediate access to the correct ‘setting’ in that they do not make mistakes with respect to this phenomenon¹ (cf. e.g. Verris & Weissenborn 1992).

Early MP proposals (i.e. Chomsky 1996² and those related to it) reinforce the idea of a parametric choice being made, with their reliance upon the Weak/Strong distinction to explain verb movement. Under this proposal, movement is covert or overt depending upon the value (Weak or Strong) of the FP node that the verb (and associated element) move to. This distinction has traditionally been viewed as being for explanatory purposes

and most likely does not correspond to anything in the real world. As such, how it is to be acquired has always been a troublesome issue in acquisition. Recent versions of the MP (e.g. Chomsky 1998, 2001) have resolved this issue somewhat, with the covert/overt movement distinction being related to the EPP-properties of heads, but it remains unclear if such a property could be acquired without the specification of a trigger – something I have previously argued (LeBlanc 2002) is contrary to the spirit of the MP.

In this paper I will attempt to develop some ideas as to how these discrete-seeming types of parametric variation can be explained without referring to the inclusion (or not) of a rule or the specification of a trigger. This is not to say that I will be seeking to eliminate variation; it is obvious that languages differ. Nor will I be trying to break the link between the language of input and the language acquired; it seems obvious that at some level a LAD makes some form of ‘decisions’ based upon the input. What I will be seeking to do is to try and base this LAD upon generally needed lexical knowledge rather than phenomena-specific (i.e. differing rules) machinery. I will be doing so in an admittedly superficial way – I will not be exploring either the developmental data or the syntactic phenomena in detail. This paper is meant to address a general learnability issue – in effect, to present a learnability idea that may be interesting.

Specifically, I will be endeavouring to replace the Weak/Strong distinction with a process of information mapping within the lexicon. I will be arguing that the abstract features which drive the checking procedure (which, in turn, drives verb movement) may be mapped to different elements in different languages (or even to different elements within the same language given different contexts). Using data concerning ‘complementizer agreement’ (or, as I describe it, CP-agreement), I will argue that more than one agreement affix can exist within a single clause. Furthermore, it seems that this (or these) additional affix(es) may be present but non-overt – not a surprising proposal if one considers the vastly differing overt agreement patterns in languages which exhibit similar patterns of movement (if one accepts that features somehow drive movement). I will then propose that movement for checking purposes is not driven by overt agreement features, but rather by non-overt abstract features (which may or may not be reflected in the features a language ‘chooses’ to make overt). These abstract features are the features that must be checked in the FPs and it is therefore these abstract features which cause elements to move within the clause for checking purposes.

Given the above tools – that more than one agreement-bearing affix can exist in a clause and that movement is driven by non-overt abstract features only – I then present a theory based upon which affix or affixes the abstract features are attached to for any given clause. I will propose that in one language the feature that drives movement to (say) CP (e.g. in a question) may be attached to the verbal affix (causing the verb to move to CP) while in another language it may be attached to another element (causing this element to move to CP). I will argue that such differences in which affixes bear which abstract features can explain a number of the basic word order facts in Germanic languages.

Finally, I will postulate that it is the role of the LAD to recognise the existence of these abstract features in a given input clause (as the features correspond to FPs, this would not be difficult) and then to map these features to the correct affix within the lexicon (i.e. verbal affix, auxiliary affix, etc.). As each affix type is related to a category rather than an individual lexical item, this mapping need only be done once per category (or perhaps once or twice more if an initial mistake must be corrected) rather than for each lexical item within a category. As such, the mapping would have discrete and wide-ranging effects, essentially ‘setting’ the behaviour for that category (for an utterance type). This, I will argue, is a lexically-based alternative to rule-based parameter setting – one that shares the properties of parameter setting but which, as per the precepts of the MP, does not alter the (invariant) syntax.

2. Movement in the minimalist program

I will start by reviewing the process of movement for checking purposes (resulting in differing word orders) within the MP. In the traditional approach of the MP, all languages undergo the same movements for checking purposes – however, languages vary as to whether particular movements are overt (pre-Spell-Out and therefore evident in the utterances of the language speaker) or covert (post-Spell-Out). This variation is encoded within the abstract properties of features, with certain features (those that drive movement) being said to be either Weak (movements delayed until after Spell-Out) or Strong (causing overt movement).³ This Weak/Strong distinction is a property of an FP (which carries a copy of the abstract feature), a strong feature in the FP causing the corresponding

(2)	<i>dank</i>	(<i>ik</i>)	<i>komen</i>	<i>1sg</i>	
	<i>daj</i>	(<i>gie</i>)	<i>komt</i>	<i>2sg</i>	
	<i>datj</i>	(<i>ij</i>)	<i>komt</i>	<i>3sgM</i>	
	<i>dase</i>	(<i>zij</i>)	<i>komt</i>	<i>3sgF</i>	
	<i>dame</i>	(<i>wunder</i>)	<i>komen</i>	<i>1pl</i>	
	<i>daj</i>	(<i>gunder</i>)	<i>komt</i>	<i>2pl</i>	
	<i>danze</i>	(<i>zunder</i>)	<i>komen</i>	<i>3pl</i>	Zwart (1997)

However, the West Flemish facts are complicated by the existence of a general cliticization phenomenon (of the pronominal subject to the complementizer) in the Germanic languages under consideration (i.e. not just West Flemish). Zwart (1997) describes the West Flemish paradigm as such:

(3)	<i>da-n-k</i>	<i>1sg</i>
	<i>da-Ø-j</i>	<i>2sg</i>
	<i>da-t-j</i>	<i>3sgM</i>
	<i>da-Ø-se</i>	<i>3sgF</i>
	<i>da-Ø-me</i>	<i>1pl</i>
	<i>da-Ø-j</i>	<i>2pl</i>
	<i>da-n-ze</i>	<i>3pl</i>

with the general form *complementizer - agreement affix - clitic*. Zwart argues for the existence of at least some agreement (rather than clitic) forms by pointing out that if there was only a process of cliticization with phonological reduction then the 2sg and 3sgM forms should be the same. This much appears to be true, but it is not clear the agreement paradigm put forward by Zwart (3 above) necessarily follows from this argument. All we can say based upon his point is that at least one of 2sg and 3sgM must be agreement. Zwart's specification of 1sg, 3sgM and 3pl as agreement (i.e. not clitic) and 2sg as cliticization seems arbitrary and, as described below, contrary to a general trend in other Germanic dialects where the 2nd person forms appear to be the ones that bear agreement.

Complementizer agreement is not limited to West Flemish – indeed, a large number of Germanic dialects exhibit some form of agreement on the complementizer.

(4)⁴ a. ... *of ik kom*

- ... *ofs toe koms*
 ‘... whether I/you come’ Groningen
- b. ... *dat (er) jûn komt*
 ... *datst (do) jûn komst*
 ‘... that he/you tonight comes’ Frisian⁵
- c. ... *ob ech wëll*
 ... *obs du wëlls*
 ‘... whether I/you want’ Luxemburgish Zwart (1997)

Bayer (1983) presents a number of arguments concerning the specific properties of apparent agreement marking on the complementizer in Bavarian. He notes that 2nd person forms in such constructions have a number of properties that differentiate them from seeming ‘agreement’ marking in other Person contexts. Bavarian 2nd person forms are resistant to wh-movement, have no obvious derivation (as a clitic form) from their related pronouns and do not differ from the agreement affixal forms of verbs; properties not shared by the agreement markings on complementizer forms related to non-2nd person forms. Because of this, Bayer classifies only 2nd person complementizer forms as bearing an agreement affix, the other complementizer forms being classified as clitics. He also points out that there is a long history in the literature of treating only 2nd person complementizer forms as agreement, dating back to Pfalz (1918) who grouped the these forms with old verbal suffixes. Although I do not have similar arguments for all of the languages discussed by Zwart (1997), or indeed knowledge of the full facts concerning them, I tentatively conclude based upon the facts above that only 2nd person complementizer forms in these dialects actually display overt agreement marking and license null subjects.⁶

The reader should not mistake the above argumentation as stating that I think that complementizers bear an agreement affix only in 2nd person forms – this is not my position. I believe that complementizers bear a (second within the clause) agreement affix in all of the Germanic V/2 languages under discussion, but that only some of these languages have an *overt* agreement form, and then only in 2nd person forms. In other words, it appears that only 2nd person forms in (some of) these languages mark agreement overtly on the complementizer, but I propose that this behaviour is indicative of a more general agreement complementizer affixation phenomenon – one that involves non-overt affixes in all of the languages and overt affixes in only a few (and then restricted to 2nd person forms). In

turn, only those languages with overt, distinct 2nd person agreement affixes on their complementizers license a null subject, and only with this privileged form.⁷

3.2. *But not complementizer agreement*

Although it seems evident that this second agreement affix exists, it is somewhat misleading to refer to it as complementizer agreement. This is because this agreement affix is related more to the position the complementizer occupies (head,CP) than to the complementizer itself. This becomes evident when an element other than the complementizer is found in head,CP. For example, when the verb occupies head,CP it bears the ‘complementizer agreement’ form rather than its own as seen in (5) and (6).

- (5) a. *Gie kom-t/*-Ø*
 ‘you come’
 b. *Kom-Ø-j/*-t-j gie?*
 ‘come you?’ *West Flemish*
- (6) a. *Gullie kom-t/*-de*
 ‘you come’
 b. *Wanneer kom-de/*-t gullie?*
 ‘when come you?’ *Brabantish* Zwart (1997)

Although there is only one agreement form present in (5b) and (6b), it is telling that this form is the one normally exhibited by the complementizer rather than the usual verbal agreement. We also see the ‘complementizer’ form present even when the complementizer is not present, as in the following examples from Bavarian (Bayer 1983) and Luxemburgish (Bruch 1973):

- (7) a. *wia oit-ts (ihr) seits is mir wurscht*
 ‘how old you are is for-me not-important’ *Bavarian*
- b. *mat wiem (datt)-s de spazéiere gaang bas*
 ‘with whom that 2sg you walk gone are’
Luxemburgish

This leads me (again, along with others) to conclude that the agreement form here is related to the position head,CP rather than to the

complementizer itself. Therefore I will refer to it as CP-agreement from this point forward.

The distinction in (5) and (6) – or, rather, the analysis thereof – is dependent upon accepting that the verb occupies different positions in the (a) and (b) examples. In (5b) and (6b) the verb is said to occupy head,CP while in (5a) and (6a) the verb is (arguably) in head,TP. Under the analysis of Travis (1984), adapted to the MP by Zwart (1997) – and henceforth referred to as the Travis/Zwart hypothesis – CP projects only if unambiguously required. In other words, unless there is unambiguous evidence for a CP (i.e. the presence of a complementizer or obvious topicalization/question movement), there isn't one. Therefore in (5a) and (6a) we say that the subject occupies Spec,TP and the verb occupies head,TP – there is no CP.

4. Accounting for multiple agreement affixes

So far I have adopted the ideas that CP projects only when required to (à la Travis/Zwart) and that there may be a second agreement affix associated with the CP-projection (as evidenced by the Germanic dialects presented). What are we to make of these observations?

4.1. Zwart (1997) - postlexicalist forms

I will start by reviewing the proposal of Zwart (1997) for dealing with these facts, a proposal I wish to follow in spirit if not in technical details. Zwart starts with the idea that lexical items in the syntax are combinations of Formal F-features (abstract features that drive movement for checking features) and Lexical-Categorial LC-features (which embody lexical content). Under this proposal, the LC-features (essentially, the lexical stem) are inserted into the derivation separately from the F-features, while F-features are generated in the FPs. For example, a verb consists of LC-features which determine the content of the verb and these LC-features will be inserted into the derivation in the VP. The F-features which determine the feature content of the clause are generated separately within the AgrS⁸ node of the clause. These F-features cannot exist independently – they must become associated with LC-features – so the verb will raise to join with the F-features (as a Last Resort movement). In the case of there being a CP projection, the F-features must move to CP to check (as the F-features

embody all of the clause's checking-related features, including those that drive movement to CP). If the head of the CP is empty (e.g. inversion in V/2) then the F-features will move to CP to check and then draw the verb (i.e. LC-features) up. However, if there is a complementizer in head, CP then the F-features will join with the LC-features of the complementizer, leaving the verb in-situ (as it now has no reason to move). Thus Zwart explains the root/non-root asymmetry in V/2 languages.

- (8) a. *Jan kust Marie.*
 '*John kisses Mary*'
 b. *...dat Jan Marie kust*
 '*...that John Mary kisses*' Zwart (1997)

So, how does Zwart account for the multiple affixation (i.e. CP-affixation) of the previous section? Zwart adopts the idea of Hoekstra & Marácz (1989) that agreement is a morphological reaction to position within the derivational structure. Indeed, he claims that "the syntactic position determines the form of the verb" (Zwart 1997:259) – although I take this to mean that agreement is a morphological reaction to the underlying F-features that drive movement to a position in the derivation. And not just the verb – in clauses with a complementizer, the form of the complementizer can also be affected. For example, in a simple (non-CP) subject-verb clause, the LC-features of the verb will move to the AgrS node to join with the F-features. At Morphology, a component of PF, this F-/LC-feature combination will be assigned a phonological form (sound features) corresponding to the features present (producing what is traditionally referred to as the verb + agreement affix). In a CP-projected clause with a complementizer, the verb will not be associated with F-features and will be assigned a form corresponding to the LC-features it embodies (this could well be the same form as if it actually was combined with the F-features) while the complementizer will be associated with F-features which could affect its phonological form (i.e. in languages with what I have termed overt CP-agreement). In a CP-projected clause without an overt complementizer, the verbal LC-features will move to CP to join with the F-features, presenting the possibility for a different phonetic form (as there are different F-features in this combination). This is just a possibility however – in many languages, e.g. Dutch, the forms will be the same

- (9) a. *Jan kust Marie*
 '*John kisses Mary*'

- b. *Waarom kust Jan Marie.*
 'Why kisses John Mary' Zwart (1997)

while in other languages, such as East Netherlandic, the forms will be different.⁹

- (10) a. *Wy speul-t/*-e*
 'we play-1pl'
 b. *Woar speul-e/*-t wy?*
 'where play-1pl we' Zwart (1997)

Zwart notes that in most Germanic languages the overt form of the verbal F-/LC-feature combination will differ either not at all or only in forms where the verb has moved to CP or not. He designates languages of the latter type as having a parametric +C or -C opposition, which we can think of as corresponding to overt forms – however, these forms are 'applied' only at Morphology, i.e. post-Spell-Out.

- (11) *East Netherlandic:* +C *speule*
 -C *speult* Zwart (1997)

Of course, not all Germanic V/2 languages have this distinction – German, for example, has no distinction between the verbal F-/LC-feature combination occurring at VP, AgrS or CP. Another Germanic V/2 language, Lower Bavarian, has a different distinction – that between verbs that move out of VP (i.e. to AgrS or CP) compared to those that do not.

- (12) a. *...daß-ma (mir) noch Minga fahr-n*
 '...that-1pl we to Munich drive-1pl'
 b. *Fahr-ma (mir) noch Minga?*
 'drive-1pl we to Munich?'
 c. *Warum daß-ma (mir) noch Minga fahr-n*
 'why that-1pl we to Munich drive-1pl'
 d. *Mir fahr-ma noch Minga*
 'we drive-1pl to Munich' Bayer (1983)

Zwart designates this language as having a parametric \pm Agr opposition (rather than a \pm C opposition), and corresponding different overt forms at PF.¹⁰

- (13) *Lower Bavarian:* +Agr *fahrma*
 -Agr *fahrn* Zwart (1997)

4.2. *My proposal: multiple affixes*

For my analysis of the Germanic V/2 phenomena I wish to adopt many of the ideas of Zwart's approach, but change the machinery involved. Zwart's proposal relies upon a split between F-features, which abstractly represent the features that drive movement for checking purposes, and LC-features, which basically represent lexical stems (this is a simplification). I wish to adopt this idea, but in a slightly different way: I will refer to features that drive movement for checking purposes as abstract features while I will refer to a lexical stem as just that (i.e. I will consider stem elements to be lexical rather than feature bundles).¹¹ This proposal will allow me to better integrate this paper's ideas with proposals I have made in previous works (LeBlanc 2001). Another reason to abandon Zwart's idea of feature representation is that his proposal relates these F-/LC-features to the eventual overt form by a parametric choice which must be associated with each verb. In other words, a stem element must be associated with all of its relevant features (F and LC) and also with different possible overt phonological forms, each corresponding to the differently defined phonological output of the feature combinations. This information must be separate from the actual feature information, as it is not applied until Morphology, long after the underlying features enter into the derivation. Relating a parameter to each lexical entry introduces a great deal of 'overhead' computational machinery and complexity into the acquisition process (c.f. LeBlanc 2002, ch. 6). I will be attempting to avoid this complexity by presenting an acquisition proposal in which the abstract features are 'set' (actually, mapped) once per categorial class of elements and then overt affixal forms are acquired lexically. In this way I will avoid the need to specify lexical parameters (i.e. one parameter per verb) and the corresponding machinery associated with them.

Zwart also proposes a single, and general (i.e. always to the same location), insertion of agreement features into the derivation (at AgrS). This is contrary to the approaches of Rohrbacher (1993), Speas (1994) and LeBlanc (2001) where the position at which agreement affixation is inserted into the derivation can have dramatic effects upon the derivational process. As well, I postulate that the overt form of the agreement affix can also have a dramatic impact on the derivation, allowing for (e.g.) null subjects under

certain conditions (although this may not actually be incompatible with Zwart's proposal, as I discuss in the following section). Because of this, and for additional reasons that will become apparent when I introduce this paper's acquisition proposal, I postulate that abstract features are inserted into the derivation attached to an affix.¹² This would appear to correspond to the traditional notion of an agreement affix, but it is not. When I say abstract features I mean non-overt features which do not necessarily have overt counterparts (not a controversial opinion) – and, more crucially, completely separate from overt features¹³ which, I propose, have no role in movement for checking purposes. Note that this is not entirely unlike Zwart's proposal. He proposes that only F-features move for checking purposes and that LC-features do not check – however, in this model there are no overt features until Morphology so there is no real comment on their status in syntax. In my proposal, overt features are inserted into the syntax with their full morphological properties, at which point I think they immediately check (i.e. at their point of insertion), if they need to check at all. All movement for checking purposes in this model is to be driven by non-overt abstract features. That non-overt (agreement) features can drive movement is not a new or radical idea, indeed it follows in any model in which agreement affixation is thought to play a role in movement. How else could a V/2 language like Afrikaans, which has no overt verbal agreement, pattern so closely with the related V/2 language Dutch, which has an abundance of overt verbal agreement forms? But the idea that overt agreement itself plays no part in movement for checking is, I think, new and will play a useful role in my proposal. Note that this is not to imply that overt agreement never moves – that it does seems self-evident (in a model with overt agreement in syntax). Overt agreement can attach to the same affix as the abstract features (and even be affected by them, as I will explain), but it merely 'goes along for the ride' as far as checking is concerned. Nor are overt features useless – for example, in LeBlanc (2001) I proposed that they are essential for identifying the subject in a null-subject utterance.

A second proposal I wish to put forward for this model is that a single clause can have multiple agreement affixes. I have defended this position previously (Section 2) for what I termed CP-agreement, and now I wish to generalize the argument. In Section 2 I linked the appearance of a second affix to the CP projection – I propose that there can, in fact, be (up to) one affix per FP in the derivation. This is not to say that there must be – I feel

that this is a matter of cross-linguistic variation, the root of which will be discussed in this paper's acquisition proposal (Section 6).

4.2.1. *Germanic V/2*

So, we have abstract features that drive movement for checking, overt features that do not (but can play other roles in the syntax) and the possibility of multiple affixes which can bear both the abstract and overt features. What does this get us? Well, much like Zwart's proposal, we get an explanation of V/2 clausal word order variation (depending upon the presence or absence of a CP). In the case of clauses without a CP, I propose that the abstract feature(s) that drive movement to TP (this would be AgrS in Zwart's proposal) are inserted attached to the affix that is attached to the verb. The verb+affix is then inserted into VP and must move up to TP to check the affix's abstract features. In the case of a CP with an overt complementizer, we have another FP, the possibility of another affix (potentially one per FP) and another possible movement pattern. Here the abstract feature(s) that drive movement to CP cannot reside on the verb, as the verb is blocked from moving to CP (by the complementizer). I propose that in this case there is a second affix¹⁴ that bears both the TP- and CP-related abstract features. Following a proposal originally made in Rohrbacher (1993) to describe word order variation and adapted to the null subject phenomenon in Speas (1994) and LeBlanc (2001), such an affix (separate from the verb) will be inserted directly into the TP, check the TP features and then move up to adjoin to the complementizer (fulfilling the phonological requirement that affixes need attach to a stem element) where it will check the CP features. This is much like the feature-bearing affixes in null subject languages (as described in LeBlanc 2001) – they are (initially) independent of the verb (i.e. paradigm-based) and are inserted directly into TP. However, the null subject language affixes attach to the verb (i.e. the verb raises to attach to them) rather than to a complementizer (assuming a complementizer is present). I propose that this is because they do not bear the CP-related abstract feature – another (usually non-overt) affix does that is inserted directly into CP (this will become clearer as we go along).

So, if the V/2 TP- and CP-related affix is inserted much like a null subject language affix (i.e. directly into TP), then why doesn't it also license a null subject? Actually, it does. As we saw in Section 2, null subjects do occur with CP-related affixes, although only in limited cases – 2nd person forms in Germanic V/2 (although see note 6). And it is just these CP-forms

that I (following Bayer 1983, among others) have proposed bear overt agreement. Non-2nd person forms bear only abstract features, but following a proposal originally made in LeBlanc (2001) it takes (accessible, as determined by Lexical Integrity) overt agreement features to license a potential null subject. So we have the following (relevant) cases: verbs which bear overt agreement affixation will license a null subject only if their affix is inserted independently into the derivation (i.e. at TP), making these overt features available to license a null subject. Following proposals made originally in LeBlanc (2001), only those languages with a paradigm-based affixal system (as opposed to a lexically-based, i.e. affix stored with verb, affixal system) do so – corresponding to the prototypical null subject languages. Affixal information is stored as a paradigm (i.e. generated separately from the stem when required) in those affixal paradigms which mark Person/Number agreement unambiguously (i.e. uniquely from one another) and lexically (i.e. attached to the stem within the lexicon) in those affixal paradigms in which at least two Person/Number affixes are the same. CP-related affixes are always inserted independently into the derivation, but only license a null subject if they bear overt agreement (i.e. 2nd person forms in some Germanic V/2 languages).¹⁵ As CP-related overt affixes always have a unique form from the other CP-related affixes (which do not bear overt agreement – although see note 7), they also act to unambiguously identify the subject of the clause – just as the unambiguous affixation of a null subject language does.

We have one final possible syntactic configuration to consider, a CP-dominated clause without an overt complementizer, i.e. an inversion. In the Germanic V/2 constructions, such clauses involve the verb moving up to CP (perhaps through TP, depending upon the theory).¹⁶ In my proposal, this is straightforward – both the TP- and CP-related abstract features are attached to the verbal affix and the verb then moves through TP and CP, checking the features. There is, however, a possible complication in this situation. Zwart uses inversion to point out that the overt form of the affix in these constructions (i.e. where the verb moves to CP) can, in some dialects, be different from the form of the affix in derivations in which the verb does not move to CP.

- (14) a. *Wy speul-t/*-e*
 ‘we play-1pl’
 b. *Woar speul-e/*-t wy?*
 ‘where play-1pl we’ (previously as 10) Zwart (1997)

There are also the examples of (12) (which I will not repeat again) that show that this variation is not limited to differences between movement to TP versus CP (Zwart's $\pm C$ opposition) but also, in Lower Bavarian, possible differences in verb+affix form between movement to TP (or CP) versus staying in VP ($\pm Agr$). Zwart cites such examples as evidence for the overt (i.e. phonological) form of the verb+affix being dependent upon the feature content (or, as he would say, the position of the F-/LC-feature bundle).

Given my arguments as to the necessity of overt features in syntax for null subject identification, one would think I would be loath to accept such an explanation. But, surprisingly, such an explanation is not incompatible with my proposal. Overt features are necessary only for the identification of the null subject; licensing of the null subject is the result of syntactic position within the derivation and the availability of features in general. Also, identification of a null subject need not be a syntactic operation; it could be a pragmatic/discourse one. It is conceivable that licensing of the null subject occurs in the syntax pre-Spell-Out, but that identification (and possibly subject deletion) occurs post-Spell-Out (and post-Morphology), in PF¹⁷. This is not to say I prefer such an explanation though. It is much more consistent with my model to simply say that the form of overt features are sensitive to the context in which they are used – i.e. to what FPs (and therefore abstract features) and stem elements are present – and that the appropriate overt features are already part of the affix when it is inserted into the derivation (either independently or as part of a verb+affix local tree). This will be explained in the acquisition proposal of Section 6. However, both of these explanations are possible, so I will remain agnostic on this point.

4.2.2. *English*

In the above I have proposed that more than one potential feature-bearing affix can exist in a clause and that this presents opportunities for syntactic variation in the form of abstract features being mapped to these affixes in different ways (and therefore causing different elements to move for checking purposes). I will now examine some of the basic patterns of word order in English to explore how such varying mappings can be used to explain seemingly different movement patterns. I will start with the proposal that English undergoes exactly the same (overt) checking of features that German does – i.e. all movement for checking purposes is done overtly (pre-Spell-Out).¹⁸ This may seem an unusual position given

English's vastly different overt word order, but this would only be problematic if the same elements were employed in checking in English and German (i.e. primarily the verb and appropriate nominals). My position is that in English the verb never engages in checking – the abstract features are always mapped to another element, usually an auxiliary. This other element then undergoes all of the required movements for checking purposes while the verb stays in-situ at its position of insertion.

When there is a verbal auxiliary this proposal seems quite straightforward:

- (15) a. *John could kiss Mary.*
 b. *John could not kiss Mary.*
 c. *Why could John not kiss Mary?*

Here, in (15a) and (15b) the auxiliary *could* is in head,TP, the subject in Spec,TP. In (15c) the auxiliary is in CP, required because of the question, as is the wh-element.

In the case of there not being a verbal auxiliary, a dummy auxiliary *do* is inserted to bear the agreement affix:

- (16) a. *John did not kiss Mary.*
 b. *Why did John not kiss Mary?*

However, in the case of there only being a single FP (TP), this dummy auxiliary appears to be absent:

- (17) a. *John kissed Mary.*

There are two possible explanations here. One is that in the case of there being only one abstract feature (TP), this feature maps to the verb and the verb moves to TP to check. When a second (or more) abstract feature is added (NegP and/or CP), this feature maps to another element (this being how languages differ)¹⁹ and the abstract TP feature 'follows' this mapping. This position seems to be supported by the fact that the verb bears overt agreement in TP-only clauses, but the dummy auxiliary bears the agreement in non-TP-only clauses.

- (18) a. *John kissed Mary.*
 b. *John did not kiss Mary.*

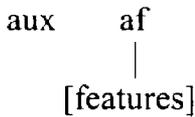
A second possibility, and the one that I prefer, is that in TP-only clauses the abstract feature is inserted directly into TP and checks without moving. In LeBlanc (2001) I presented a similar proposal with respect to child RIs, with a Non-Overt Feature Bundle (NOFB) being inserted to bear agreement features when the appropriate overt affix is not known by the child. In such a case, I proposed that the child still uses the root verb (with a default, possibly overt, affix corresponding to the infinitival form) but that the relevant agreement features are inserted as a NOFB which is inserted directly into head,TP. This NOFB was restricted from moving because of its status as a free-form realisation of features. The situation here is similar, but rather than bearing overt agreement features (as it was not generated to do so), the NOFB bears only the abstract TP feature (this is evident from the fact that the verb still bears the agreement features).²⁰ The abstract-feature-bearing NOFB does not license a null subject (as the agreement-bearing NOFB of LeBlanc 2001 does) because it is the availability of overt agreement features (in a TP Spec-head configuration) that licenses a null subject.

As a free-form realisation of features, the NOFB is prevented from moving. Therefore, if an abstract-feature-bearing NOFB need move, it must take on default phonological properties – that of the dummy *do* auxiliary. As with normal auxiliaries, the dummy auxiliary will now ‘strip’ the verb of its overt agreement features, leaving it with a default affixal form (in English, a non-overt affix). Note, however, that this does not mean that the dummy auxiliary will now license a null subject, even though it now bears the agreement features. Unlike the NOFB of LeBlanc (2001), where the agreement features were available for the syntactic operation of licensing a null subject,

- (19) NOFB
 |
 [features]

the dummy auxiliary has the structure of a normal English auxiliary, i.e. auxiliary and affix as a local tree dominated by the properties of the auxiliary.

(20) aux



As such, the features of the dummy auxiliary are unavailable for licensing a null subject because of Lexical Integrity.

5. *The proposal in a nutshell*

- Under this proposal, only abstract features are involved in checking within the FPs. Overt features may be involved in other syntactic and pragmatic/discourse-related operations, but checking involves only the non-overt abstract features.
- Abstract features are inserted directly into the derivation as a free-form realisation of features (i.e. a NOFB) or are attached to affixes. These affixes may, in turn, be attached to verbs, auxiliaries and complementizers.
- NOFBs may not move because of their status as free-form realisations of features. Therefore, if such features need move in the derivation, then they will take on the form of a dummy *do* auxiliary. As with the case of a normal auxiliary, the dummy auxiliary ‘strips’ the verb of its overt agreement features, leaving it with a default infinitival form.
- There may be more than one affix/NOFB (and therefore potential carrier of abstract features) per clause. Under the proposal there is potentially one affix/NOFB per FP (in addition to the verb), although not all languages will use all of the possibilities available.
- Each abstract feature will map (within the lexicon) to an affix/NOFB; more than one abstract feature can map to a single affix but, because of its inability to move, only a single abstract feature may be mapped to a NOFB.
- FPs project only when required, therefore different utterance types (e.g. utterances employing a TP only, utterances employing a TP and CP, etc.) present different feature-to-affix/NOFB mapping possibilities. It is the job of the LAD to recognise each unique configuration of FPs and correctly map the abstract features to the correct affixes/NOFBs (more on this immediately below).

Given these basic proposals, the model presents us with a number of possibilities for characterizing the varying overt word order patterns while maintaining an invariant pre-Spell-Out checking procedure (i.e. no covert/overt movement distinction – i.e. no Weak/Strong distinction).

6. The acquisition proposal – feature mapping

If we accept that the preceding proposal is correct, we still have the problem of how the child acquires abstract feature knowledge and maps such features to the elements in the lexicon. To explain such a process, I will start by making the following observation: there is a direct correlation between FPs and their related abstract features. In other words, if there is a TP, there is an abstract TP feature; if there is a CP, there is an abstract CP feature; if a NegP, then an abstract NegP feature. Therefore the LAD need not recognise a (non-overt) abstract feature, rather it need merely recognise the existence of an FP in the input utterance. Under the Travis/Zwart proposal (where CP projects only when unambiguously required) this is relatively straight-forward as FPs other than TP are identified by context: the existence of a negation element for NegP, the existence of an overt complementizer, topicalization or a question (marked by an overt element or voiced inflection) for CP. Therefore a simple analysis of the input utterance will provide the LAD with a knowledge of the abstract features present. Now the only problem is to map the abstract features to the relevant lexical items (i.e. affixes) for each unique combination of FPs (roughly, each context).

The mapping procedure could also be a relatively straight-forward procedure. For each FP present (plus the verbal affix) there is one potential affix/NOFB to be mapped to (although often more than one abstract feature will map to a single affix, reducing the number of affixes/NOFBs ‘in play’ to less than the number of FPs). Each of these affixes (but not, of course, NOFBs) must, in turn, be associated with a lexical item (e.g. verb, auxiliary, complementizer).²¹ This leaves us with the following possibilities that the LAD must choose from:

- (21) abstract features: TP, CP, NegP
 feature bearer: affix, NOFB
 stem: verb, complementizer, auxiliary

Each of the abstract features can map to the affix/NOFB that is (potentially) inserted into its corresponding FP or to an affix (but not a NOFB) inserted into an FP lower in the tree structure – e.g. the TP feature can map to the affix inserted into TP or NegP (in which case there would not be a separate affix/NOFB for, and inserted into, TP) but not an affix inserted into CP.²² Exactly how this mapping is done is open to debate. The most straight-forward proposal would be that the LAD simply ‘tries’ various mappings (without vocalising them) until one is found which generates (as driven by the syntax) the correct word order (as observed in the input).²³ This mapping is then used until another input utterance indicates against the chosen mapping (which could happen in the case of ambiguous mappings – i.e. ones that produce the same overt word order for a subset of utterances), in which case the present mapping would be discarded and a new one (which accounts for the new facts) chosen. However, as each different combination of FPs can have different mappings, such a re-alignment of mappings would be rare. Given that children make few to no errors in this domain, and acquisition errors being our main insight into the possible (mal-)functioning of the underlying acquisition mechanisms, it is arguable that there is no basis for postulating a more complex acquisition mechanism.

There is then the question of acquiring the relevant overt features for the affixes (if they have any). This would be a straight-forward lexically-based (i.e. for each lexical stem) procedure (cf. LeBlanc 2001 for discussion). The only ‘complication’ is that this acquisition procedure would not be just for differing P/N/T combinations, but would also vary by context – as this is the framework provided by the mapping procedure. As we saw in Sections 3.1. and 3.2., this is exactly what the data require: there are different affixal forms for different contexts (e.g. if a verb+af in East Netherlandic moves only to TP or continues on to CP). Zwart (1997) explains this behaviour by introducing a lexically-based parameter (and all of the overhead machinery associated with it) that determines overt form at Morphology – the $\pm C$ and $\pm Agr$ oppositions. My proposal need not do this; each differing mapping of abstract features to (individual) affixal forms provides a framework upon which to base a lexical mapping of overt features.

7. *Summary*

In this paper I have proposed both a new model of movement for checking purposes and how an acquisition procedure based on such a model could allow a child to learn the proper word order for a particular language. In this model all movement for checking purposes is overt, or pre-Spell-Out: word order variation is the result of which elements move to check rather than when they check. Abstract features which drive movement may be mapped to different elements (that is, to affixes which attach to them or to NOFBs which remain independent) within a clause in one language versus another, causing different elements to move to check. This, in turn, leads to differing word orders in different languages, as well as to different word orders within a single language depending upon context (i.e. if the clause has a CP and/or NegP). Under such a model it becomes the job of the LAD to identify the relevant context and abstract features (the existence of particular FPs) and to map the abstract features to the appropriate feature bearers (NOFBs or affixes, the latter of which are then related to lexical stems).

8. *Conclusion*

This proposal seeks to combine properties of two, seemingly contradictory, acquisition approaches: the rule-based parameter setting model and lexically-based models. The rule-based parameter setting model is characterized by a learning process in which one syntactic rule is chosen to the exclusion of all other possible rules which could determine the phenomenon under consideration. This process is both discrete, the choice of one rule instantly ruling out other possible behaviours, and wide-ranging, applying to the phenomenon itself rather than the particular elements participating in the behaviour. On the other hand we have lexically-based proposals, which have at their root a learning procedure more amenable to gradual and varied behaviours. These models rely upon the properties of particular lexical elements being acquired; these properties then affecting the syntactic derivation as the values of the properties interact with the rules of syntax. Such acquisition models generally predict more varied child behaviour with respect to the acquisition of a particular phenomenon – lexical element-based acquisition allowing lexical element-based variation. The goal of this paper has been to apply a lexically-based acquisition model to a phenomenon that exhibits the observed acquisition path characteristic

of the rule-based parameter setting model. This has been accomplished by basing the acquisition of a phenomenon (word order) upon the acquisition properties of an entire class of items (and how that class is represented within the lexicon) rather than individual lexical items. By ascribing properties to an entire class of items and by grounding potential class-based differences within the lexicon, I have proposed an acquisition procedure which exhibits the overt discrete behaviour (i.e. all items within this class being governed by a single ‘decision’) usually associated with rule-based models while keeping the locus of variation firmly rooted within the lexicon. Thus the model explains a discrete acquisition phenomenon while adhering to the basic precept of the MP: that all variation is within the lexicon. In effect I have moved the ‘choice’ associated with parameter setting (i.e. one rule versus another) to the lexicon, where the ‘choice’ is now how particular properties (i.e. abstract features) will be mapped to lexical items. In effect we have parametric choice but it applies to feature mapping rather than rules, giving us a model of parametric mapping.

Notes

1. It is more correct to say that children exhibit few to no errors once they exhibit proper comprehension of the features involved (although the point that word order acquisition is largely error-free is generally correct). This may appear to be begging the question (as in the MP, features determine behaviour), but in this instance (word order) I will be arguing that the overt (agreement) properties of the features do not determine behaviour - i.e. movement for checking purposes is not driven by overt agreement properties. Under the proposal I will make, the mere existence of abstract, movement-related features seems to trigger an acquisition process which must ‘choose’ between a number of possible word orders. In other words, the existence of features drives movement, but which language-specific movement pattern is selected appears to be independent of the actual overt feature properties.
2. I will confine myself to Chomsky 1996. I have no wish to involve myself in the syntactic fray surrounding competing modern versions of the MP.
3. A Weak feature can exist at PF (i.e. not cause a crash) while a Strong feature cannot and therefore must be eliminated before Spell-Out.

4. Note that every contrast here involves 2nd person.
5. I note that Zwart lists a null subject possibility with a 3sg person form in Frisian. However, he does not provide evidence that this form is a null subject rather than clitic form. As such, I am unable to comment on this classification which seems to run counter to the facts in other Germanic dialects.
6. But see Bayer (1983), discussed in LeBlanc (2002), for the exceptional (both to this generalisation and in its general behaviour) case of 1pl in Lower Bavarian.
7. Note that this is almost certainly a simplification. As pointed out in Zwart (1997), Zurich German allows null subjects with complementizers in 2nd person contexts even though there is no overt agreement marking on the complementizer. Therefore it seems that the distinction is based more on the special status of the 2nd person forms. If one considers the 2nd person forms to be somehow privileged (i.e. separate from the other conjugation) then the argumentation could hold, as then the 2nd person forms are distinct simply because they are 2nd person and the identity of the null subject could be determined (as only 2nd person forms are paradigm-based) – cf. LeBlanc (2002). However, this does not adequately explain how such a paradigm-based/lexically-based distinction could arise in the first place. Null subject behaviour is deeply nuanced and I cannot claim to have fully captured its properties in any of my works on the matter. See also the previous note.
8. Zwart assumes a CP-AgrS-VP structure while in my proposal I will be adopting the CP-TP-VP structure of Chomsky (1996), Chapter 4.10.
9. See also examples (5) and (6).
10. Zwart notes that he knows of no languages that have all three possibilities, i.e. different forms for a verbal F-/LC-feature combination at CP, AgrS and CP.
11. See the end of Section 3.2.1 for a discussion as to whether this distinction is of any consequence.

12. This affix may be overt, non-overt or a free-form realisation of the abstract features (a Non-Overt Feature Bundle). This will become clearer as we go along.
13. Overt features may reflect the content of underlying abstract features, but abstract features operate independently of overt features.
14. The verb still has its affix, potentially bearing overt features – but as this affix lacks abstract features, it need not (and will not) move to check.
15. Actually, as we shall see in Section 5, it is possible that a CP-related affix could be inserted directly into CP (i.e. if it bore only the abstract CP feature, but not the TP feature). Of course, in such a case the CP-related affix would not license a null subject no matter what its overt form, as licensing a null subject is a TP-related phenomenon.
16. For example, in Zwart's proposal the verbal LC-features move directly from VP to CP.
17. Interestingly enough, Zwart claims that "The syntactic theory... is not necessarily affected by the choice between lexicalism and postlexicalism" (Zwart 1997:161). In this case the statement appears to be borne out.
18. I mention again that this paper is only a bare-bones proposal and as such I will be considering only a small subset of the English movement patterns.
19. Each context (i.e. unique combination of abstract features) having its own mapping. This accounts for both intra- (i.e. from context to context) and inter-language variation of movement patterns.
20. The idea of a non-overt verbal element being inserted to bear syntactic function is not original. For example, Kayne (2000) and van Riemsdijk (2001 – to appear) have made similar proposals (but, of course, for different purposes).

21. Although the overt form (or not) of each affix for each stem will have to be acquired separately, the mapping of the affix to a class of stem elements is done only once – e.g. the affix may be mapped (once) to the verb class in a particular context, but the overt form of the stem for each affix (for each verb and for each P/N/T combination) must be acquired separately.
22. There is no requirement that the abstract TP and CP features be mapped to the same affix/NOFB.
23. Given the very limited number of elements that the procedure has to deal with, the combinatorics of such an operation would be very limited.

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Discourse Linkers as Conceptual/Procedural Drivers of Discourse Interpretation

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1. Introduction

This paper discusses how two French linkers *quoique* and *bien que* function from the perspective of time-linear grammar. Previous information-based or formal approaches to linkers tended to use coherence relations and a variant of Rhetorical Structure Theory (Mann & Thompson 1986) to frame their analyses (Fraser 1990, Sanders, Spooren & Noordman 1993, Hovy & Maier 1994, Marcu 1996). These approaches did not model the natural language understanding process as a linear, left-to-right phenomenon that happens in the flow of time. The analysis in this paper is framed in Discourse Information Grammar (DIG) (Sévigny 2000, 2002, forthcoming a, b, c, d), a lexicalist, procedural approach that models natural language understanding as operating in a left-to-right, linear, non-derivational fashion. Section 2. presents a very brief description of how DIG works. Section 3. presents a discussion of *quoique* and *bien que*, the phenomena under examination. Section 4. very briefly discusses how DIG and Relevance Theory might be compatible. The conclusion presents a short summary of the arguments of the paper.

2. Discourse Information Grammar

2.1. Overview

Discourse Information Grammar (DIG) is based on the idea that natural language understanding works from left to right, starting with a bare initial representation and then enriching that representation as additional information is accumulated as a result of combining the feature-structure representation of the initial word with those of subsequent words and/or structures. Linguistics has recently seen a rise in interest in time-linear grammar with the development of such theories as Dynamic Syntax (Kempson, Meyer-Viol and Gabbay 2001), Axiomatic Grammar (Milward 1994), Surface-Compositional Linear Internal Matching (SLIM) (Hausser 1999), Markov Syntax (Tugwell 1998) and Linearized Phrase Structure Grammar (Shin 1987). These approaches all have in common that they

study the construction of linguistic representations in the flow of time. These approaches also differ somewhat from the view that knowledge of language consists of abstract, declarative syntactic constraints which operate without motivation from the procedural dynamics underlying the intermediary representations necessary for modelling the left-to-right flow of natural language understanding. Rather, DIG and the other dynamic time-linear approaches to grammatical analysis claim that linguistic competence is the ability to assemble representations of linguistic information incrementally (dynamically) and that children learn the words, information and operations necessary to deal with that information accumulation. To take this approach, it is necessary to define lexical items and the rules for combining them under two working principles: a) input is linear and occurs one word at a time; b) as a text evolves, the information it contains is constructed incrementally and may be edited as required by new input, making the intermediary representations non-monotonic and defeasible. There is no process of matching against a pre-established structure, as in SLIM, nor is there any reliance on a set of phrase-structure rules. Rather, DIG syntax in some ways resembles dependency-based approaches to syntax, with the incremental construction of constituents of a structural, functional and conceptual nature. There is no necessary, pre-set overarching S node. Instead, there are relational dependencies between minimal discourse information units.

In order to proceed in this manner, DIG relies heavily on a well thought out lexicon, designed to meet the needs of linear, incremental information accumulation.¹ In DIG, words and linguistic signals fall into seven basic categories: *names, relators, separators, terminators, particles, fillers, and commentators*. Of these categories only the first four will be examined in this paper. The emphasis on written language means that for now, DIG is mostly a theory of text-linguistic interpretation. It is in this context that most of the current DIG analyses have been carried out (cf. references to my work above). In DIG, a text is viewed, whether complete or not, as an orchestrated cable of information with several lines or substreams. The following is a partial list of these substreams: *lexical, structural, functional, situational, logical, anaphoric, semantic and topical*. As words are input and processed, information accumulates and begins to interact to form situational meaning and discourse structures. Continuing with the orchestral metaphor, just as not all the instruments of an orchestra need be (equally) active at any given time during the playing of the score (*viz.* the text being processed), so it is that the several substreams of discourse

information need not be at the same stage of development, activation or even specification. In order to model this type of growth, informally, DIG views information from three complementary perspectives: a) *default*; b) *underspecified*; and c) *specified, but subject to any necessary corrections as necessitated by new developments* (usually following from information generated as a result of processing new input).

As words are input and processed, they combine into various structures according to syntactic rules, but before these structural units can be integrated into the discourse stream, they must be checked for admissibility. If and only if the new minimal discourse information unit is compatible with previous information can it be functionalized and integrated into the current discourse stream. As for the discourse stream itself, until it can be completely closed, it is assigned the status of discourse-fragment. When complete closure is triggered, the discourse-fragment is assigned the status of 'discourse information unit.' Each unit type encapsulates additional information. These several concepts are illustrated in the examples below.

Schematically, in DIG, discourse is viewed as a set of integrated partitions, called discourse information units (DIU), as in (1) below.

$$(1) \text{ Discourse} = \text{DIU}_1 + \dots + \text{DIU}_n$$

Discourse information units, in turn, are viewed as connected partitions, called minimal discourse information units as in (2),

$$(2) \text{ Discourse information unit} = \text{MDIU}_1 + \dots + \text{MDIU}_n + \text{T}$$

where each minimal discourse information unit consists of functionalized structures connected in two fundamental ways to other minimal discourse information units: a) functionally and b) relationally.² The final symbol 'T' represents a terminator which, for the present paper, will consist of one of the following sentence final markers: *period*, *interrogation mark*, *exclamation mark* and the *semi-colon*. Consider the texts:

(3) *Quoiqu'il fût très fatigué, Pierre est allé à la réunion.*

(4) *Pierre est allé à la réunion, quoiqu'il fût très fatigué.*

If we first read them through and then effect an analysis, we can derive a representation which can act as a pattern or an abstract structure which, in fact, represents this type of utterance. In other words, we are operating in terms of complete texts. In DIG, we proceed differently: one word at a time. Viewed from this perspective, the problem becomes quite different, as can be ascertained by considering the following possible questions which can be asked after processing a word:

- a) What kind of word is the new input?
- b) What is its structure type (s-type)
- c) Is it compatible with what has been processed so far? If so, in what way? If not, why not?
- d) Can it be added to what has been processed so far? If so, what sorts of changes will it trigger?
- e) What new information does it bring? Trigger?
- f) What changes or clarifications does it trigger?

In order to deal with these questions, each word must contain some minimal amount of lexical information: information of a conceptual nature, as well as limited amounts of world knowledge related to the word in question. In addition, the information which it brings will trigger new relations and interrelations, thus creating an information network. The problem DIG faces is how to deal with these and many other questions within the stringent time limitations imposed by real-time linear text processing, an activity routinely handled by humans during natural language processing. Any theory of time-linear grammar must aim at theoretical elegance and simplicity. One promising path involves the concepts of default values and underspecification.

In terms of word categories, DIG views nominal structures as names, which are usually used as arguments for relators. Such nominal structures may even incorporate events as in (5) below:

- (5) *That he kept getting up in spite of all the pain he was evidently enduring surprised us all to no end.*

where the subordinate noun clause is assigned the f-role of SUBJECT. In order to be able to assume this f-role, the clause must be nominalized, that is, assume the nature of a name. In English, the name's immediate position before the verb *surprised* causes it to be assigned the f-role of SUBJECT.

In (6) below, the very same nominal structure is assigned the f-role of DIRECT OBJECT:

- (6) *We were surprised when we learned that he kept getting up in spite of all the pain he was evidently enduring.*

2.2. Linker attributes and their definitions

The pivotal role played by relators as well as the complex nature of discourse information accumulated by DIG requires that relators have a fairly rich lexical representation which covers the parameters of the discourse stream. That this is the case becomes evident when we consider a typical information template for linkers – the subcategory of relators dealt with in this paper – as presented in Table 1 below. (Note that though much of the information presented in this table could be presented in an HPSG-style AVM notation, this would reduce clarity in the context of this article.) This is not an exhaustive template, but it does indicate the bulk of the information and processes which accompany the processing of a linker. Below is a series of brief descriptions of the attribute features listed in the template.

TEXTUAL INFO:

INPUT-NAME: The letters which identify this lexical entry.

TEXT-ID: Textual ID. Could be a running integer count. Not used in this study.

LEXICAL INFO:

ENTRY-NAME: the ‘word’ heading listed in the lexicon. This paper will not enter into the difficulties which still need to be resolved here. For instance, should homographs with different s-types be treated as separate entries or as different subentries for a generic name entry? In DIG this problem is a ‘contained problem’ meaning that its resolution will not affect the workings of DIG although there could be gains/losses in processing speed from the decisions taken.

Table 1: A template for linker-related information (conceptual, procedural, link-types)

TEXTUAL INFO	PROCEDURAL INFO	LINKS TRIGGERED
INPUT-NAME	F-ROLE TRIGGERED	Lexical
TEXT-ID	L-ARG: TYPE	Structural
	L-ARG:D-LEVEL	Functional
LEXICAL INFO	L-ARG:LOGICAL ROLE	local contextual
ENTRY-NAME	L-ARG:HEAD	Logical
LINKER-TYPE		Situational
LINKER:SEMANTIC INFO	R-ARG: TYPE	Anaphoric
LINKER:LOGICAL PATTERN	R-ARG:D-LEVEL	Semantic
LINKER:POLARITY-CHANGE?	R-ARG:LOGICAL ROLE	Topical
NO-OF-ARGS	R-ARG:HEAD	
EMBEDS-RIGHT-ARG?		

LINKER-TYPE: There are nine common types of linkers: the empty linker (denoted by #), pronouns, prepositions, postpositions, relative pronouns, coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs and separators (non-terminal punctuation marks, such as the comma, the dash, the colon, etc.).

LINKER:SEMANTIC-INFO: the semantic attributes which capture the content meaning of the linker.

LINKER:F-ROLE-TRIGGERED: a linker along with its right argument triggers functional roles, which usually represent forms of MODIFICATION.

LINKER:LOGICAL-PATTERN: linkers usually trigger a simple logical pattern. At times, however, the pattern may be more complicated as in the case of *bien que* which triggers contrast which is realized as an overriding of the expected results normally triggered by the r-arg (See example below).

LINKER:POLARITY-CHANGE?: At times, a linker will trigger a relation which involves a connotative value change. For example, the linker *quoique* subsumes a contrast based on doing something or not doing it depending on the relative connotative value of its arguments. Schematically, this can be captured in the following pseudo-implicatory expression:

$$(p \rightarrow \sim q) \wedge q.$$

To see how this works, consider the following examples:

(7) *Quoiqu'il fût très malade, il est venu à la réunion.*

In this case the connotative value of r-arg: *il fût très malade* is negative. Hence we would expect that he would not come to the meeting, but he did. Consider, now, the bizarre effect of the pseudo-implicatory expression: $(p \rightarrow \sim q) \wedge \sim q$.

(8) *Quoiqu'il fût très malade, il n'est pas venu à la réunion.*

We are left wondering what the point of the utterance was.

NO-OF-ARGS: the number of arguments which accompany a linker. Most have two arguments, but occasionally, one only as in the case of starting an utterance with *que* used as a nominalizer

(9) *Qu'il soit venu me surprend!*

EMBEDS-R-ARG?: Some linkers embed their right arguments. Prepositions, subordinating conjunctions, and relative pronouns do so

regularly. Others, such as pronouns and coordinating conjunctions never do.

PROCEDURAL INFO:

F-ROLE-OF-R-ARG: This refers to the functional role of the ‘linker + r-arg’. Often, this will differ from the functional role of the ‘r-arg’. For instance, the f-role of *la table* in *sur la table* is OP (object of the preposition *sur*), although the functional role of *sur la table* is, say, MOD:ADV:LOCATION.

L-ARG:TYPE: the left argument of the linker. Its type constrains the type of linker that may follow it. A subordinating conjunction will usually require a verb or a modifier as left argument. A preposition usually requires a noun or a verb or a modifier. There is a close-knit relation obtaining among left argument, linker and functional role.

L-ARG:D-LEVEL: an arbitrary value to indicate the degree of nesting or embedding within an utterance. In this study, non-embedded content is considered to be at d-level 0. Each embedding decreases this level by 1.

L-ARG:LOGICAL-ROLE: Everything we say has a logical value of some sort; these can include illocutionary forces. Most sentences are usually a form of assertion, although they may involve an implication, a contrast, a negation, etc. Interestingly, once a logical pattern has been triggered, the rest of the information is accumulated in a way which is identical to assertion, even when the result is an interrogation, an exclamation or a command. This is very important to the DIG analysis of wh-questions (Sévigny, forthcoming d).

L-ARG:HEAD: The main word in a structure, as a noun is HEAD of a nominal structure. In the examples below, we see that the HEAD accumulates the various attribute feature values which enter into its structure.

R-ARG:TYPE: All linkers have a right argument. Note that the terms ‘left argument’ and ‘right argument’ are relative to the linker, not to their position in an utterance. For instance, in

(10) *Bienqu'il fût malade, Robert s'est rendu à la réunion.*

the left argument occurs after, that is to the right of, the right argument
il fût malade.

R-ARG:D-LEVEL: If embedding is triggered by the linker, the r-arg will be one level below the l-arg of the linker.

R-ARG:LOGICAL-ROLE: Normally, this will be assertion of some sort. But some relations will trigger a different logical role. For example, 'il n'avait pas étudié' has the logical role of 'cause/reason' in

(11) *Il n'a pas bien réussi, parce qu'il avait pas étudié.*

R-ARG:HEAD: See above: L-ARG:HEAD

LINKS TRIGGERED:

LEXICAL: refers to any feature value(s) from two or more connected words which need to be compatible. For instance, if a text is developing a description of hunting birds, each HEAD noun would have to be compatible vis-à-vis, say, +bird, +predatory. If the word *tire* slips in, then it is likely to be incompatible with the topic of 'hunting birds.' Lexical links play an important role in establishing topic chains. Entry-name LEXICAL values are frequently used to capture the presence of repetition.

STRUCTURAL: usually refers to serialization phenomena. For instance, structural links are used to capture information that describes a number of such phenomena such as parallel structure, repetition, emphasis, etc.

FUNCTIONAL: bindings between arguments and compatible structures with compatible functional roles. (See below under example (15)).

LOGICAL: logical roles which gradually complete logical patterns. For example, if a logical pattern of assertion has been initiated and serialization is triggered, this will extend the logical pattern possibly beyond a single discourse unit.

SITUATIONAL: refers to participant and event roles, including complementizer roles.

ANAPHORIC: the resolution of pronoun and antecedent or postcedent, pro-verb and event antecedent, pre-verb and event postcedent, etc.

SEMANTIC: any of the various semantic attribute fields which can be connected into, say, a chain of such attributes. A different type of semantic connection involves hierarchical relations. A third example is the establishing of a semantic network where all key words are linked vis-à-vis a certain generic or hyperonymic concept.

TOPICAL: discourse involves situational networking. One way of monitoring this development is to check for topical consistency and integrity and for additional relations which will effect additional connections between/among two or more topics.

From these linker attribute descriptions, we see that a linker contains three general types of information: textual, lexical and procedural. What is not immediately evident is that linkers also trigger two additional types of information: anticipatory and networked/relational. This is suggested by several attributes: *logical pattern triggered*, *triggers-polarity-change?*, *no-of-args*, *embeds-right-arg?*, *f-role-triggered*, *l-arg:head*, *r-arg:head*. Anticipatory information reduces the amount of active decision-making required during normal discourse processing. For instance, in cases where the reader/listener is taking in a completely novel situation, very little anticipatory information is taken in at any given time with the result that communication slows down to short inputs at a time. As familiarity with the cognitive schemas necessary for interpretation increases, these inputs become more familiar and processing can operate more efficiently.

In terms of processing linkers, two common cases are discussed in this paper:

- a) the linker comes first; in this case neither the l-arg nor the r-arg is known
- b) the l-arg is processed before the linker is input

In the examples, we will see that order of processing does not affect the informational outcome, but the amount of information immediately processable and anticipatable will vary. Finally, it bears repeating that the several attribute fields of a processed linker are usually at various stages of specification. Some, at times, may not even receive any specification at all

if it is not necessary. To summarize the discussion thus far: when a linker is processed, normally more than one substream of information is affected. What happens can be schematized as follows:

- i) the linker's lexical information is processed
- ii) left argument information, if available, is verified
- iii) logical information is processed and set up as a pattern
- iv) discourse level may be affected, if the linker embeds its right argument
- v) the polarity valence may be changed, depending on the nature of the linker just processed
- vi) any of several links may be specified or may be potentially triggered
- vii) two functional roles will be specified and/or triggered: the immediate f-role of the r-arg and the f-role of the linker and its right argument. Often, these two f-roles are different and of different scopes.
- viii) a number of semantic attributes will be checked for consistency with argument values, semantic integrity and logical adequacy, especially if there is a polarity change which must be effected.
- ix) argument type will be checked and enforced, if necessary (For example, a preposition must be followed by a nominal structure or a temporarily nominalized structure)
- x) the local context may be updated to incorporate additional situational information

This list is meant to be suggestive rather than complete, but it is extensive enough to indicate that linkers, relators in general, trigger a lot of activity, much of it anticipatory. This is not unusual, given the pivotal role played by the class of relators in general in a theory of left-to-right interpretation. Let us now illustrate these concepts at work.

3. *Illustrative examples*

3.1. *Quoique*

Consider the input:

(12) *Quoique*

Table 2: Representation of information triggered by *quoique* in steps

TEXTUAL INFO	Step 1	Step 2
INPUT-NAME	<quoique>	
TEXT-ID	-	
LEXICAL INFO		
ENTRY-NAME	Quoique	quoiqu'
LINKER-TYPE	subordinate-conjunction	
LINKER:SEMANTIC INFO	field: logical type: concession: +adversary	
LINKER:LOGICAL PATTERN TRIGGERED	$(P(r\text{-arg}) \rightarrow \sim P(l\text{-arg})) \dot{\cup} P(l\text{-arg})$ or $(P(r\text{-arg}) \rightarrow P(l\text{-arg})) \dot{\cup} \sim P(l\text{-arg})$	
TRIGGERS-POLARITY-CHANGE?	Yes	
NO-OF-ARGS	2	
EMBEDS-RIGHT-ARG?	Yes	
PROCEDURAL INFO		
F-ROLE TRIGGERED	mod:adv:concession	$(P(r\text{-arg}) \rightarrow \sim P(l\text{-arg})) \dot{\cup} P(l\text{-arg})$
L-ARG: TYPE	S: HEAD: verb-structure	
L-ARG:D-LEVEL	0	

L-ARG:LOGICAL ROLE	result: assertion: P(l-arg)	
L-ARG:HEAD	verb-structure	
R-ARG: TYPE	S:HEAD: verb-structure	être(il, très fatigué)
R-ARG:D-LEVEL	-1	
R-ARG:LOGICAL ROLE	Cause:negative implication: $P(r\text{-arg}) \rightarrow \sim P(l\text{-arg})$	
R-ARG:HEAD	verb-structure	
LINKS TRIGGERED		
Lexical		
Structural		
Functional		
Logical		être(il, très fatigué) $\rightarrow \sim P(l\text{-arg})$
Situational		participant1: il relation1: être(il, fatigué) relation2: ?
Anaphoric		il = ?
Semantic		l-arg:type: event
Topical		

From its template: (step 1 only at this point) we know the following:

- i) the left argument will probably be of type VERB;
- ii) the right argument will be of type S or a reduced S;
- iii) the logical structure will be $((P(\text{r-arg}) \rightarrow \sim P(\text{l-arg})) \wedge P(\text{l-arg}))$;
- iv) the right argument will be embedded one level below the left argument;
- v) there will be a realization of the left argument, although one or more properties in the right argument normally prevents the left argument from being realized;
- vi) certain sundry morphological details pertaining to tense, such as the verb of the right argument being in the subjunctive mood;³

It is to be noted that at the moment of processing (12) above, none of this information is actual. Thus, linkers trigger a lot of information anticipation. This is important because of the necessity to operate with the limits of real-time natural language processing. The psychological reality underlying this observation is easily verifiable. One has but to consider the halting processing which results when a linker equivalent to *quoique* needs to be processed in a newly acquired language. It is also interesting to note that extra processing time is normally required if the right argument involves negation, as in (13) below:

(13) *Quoiqu'il ne fût pas très faible, Pierre n'a pas pu soulever le poids.*

Normally, this will cause some hesitation in most speakers. Its logical structure is also more complex, as can be seen in (14) below:

(14) $((P(\sim(\text{r-arg})) \rightarrow \sim(P(\sim(\text{l-arg})))) \wedge P(\sim(\text{l-arg})))$

Continuing with our sample text, we will skip ahead to the end of the right argument. This yields:

(15) *Quoiqu'il fût très fatigué,*

The information accumulated to date is summarized schematically in **bold** in table 2, step 2 above and commented in more detail below:

i) *il* has default index values +masc, +sg, +3rd person. Its form indicates that its most probable functional role will be SUBJECT. Its antecedent is unknown, but it will have index values +masc, +sg, +3rd person. At this moment, an anaphoric link is anticipated.

ii) *fût* is the verb 'être(nominal-1, {complement}).' It is marked +past, +static, +sg, +3rd person, +subjunctive. Since it follows immediately after a nominal phrase which is compatible with it, it triggers the assignment of the functional role SUBJECT for that nominal phrase. So far, a situation has developed where PARTICIPANT:DOER = *il* and the RELATION is 'être(*il*, {complement}).' Since *quoique* requires that its right argument be of type 'S' or an ellipsis of it, there is anticipation that more information is to follow.

iii) *très* is a modifier, a member of the class of intensifying adverbs. These values are part of its lexical specification. We now anticipate a modifier or a prepositional phrase to follow with the functional role of MODIFIER:ADV:INTENSIFIER. For reasons which cannot be justified in this article, we also expect the modified word to be of category ADJECTIVE. This is connected to the lexical properties of 'être().' Thus, we expect input to follow *très* to be assigned the functional role MOD:ADJ:DESC. This could turn out to be different. It is for developments like this one that the representations generated by DIG, need to be defeasible.

iv) *fatigué* has category 'adjective.' Hence, it meets anticipated information requirements perfectly. Since it also is marked +masc, and +sg, it can be unified with 'il' which now takes on the attribute values attached to *fatigué*. From these attribute values, we can now assign a negative value to the polarity value of the right argument of *quoique*. This will create the anticipation pattern (16) below:

(16) $(P(r\text{-arg}) \rightarrow \sim(P(l\text{-arg})) \wedge P(l\text{-arg}))$

That is, it is now expected that whatever the event in the left argument of *quoique* will be, it should not take place because *il* is marked [+très fatigué]. But the left argument event will take place. Also implied are semantic attribute features connected with event and *fatigué*, but we will not pursue this development. We mention it merely to point out just how much internal information does accumulate during text processing.

v) when the separator ‘,’ is processed, the right argument has reached one of two states: closure or a form of elaboration or serialization. Only further input can enable a decision on this matter.

So far, we have the following situation: (not all details are included)

SIT: PARTICIPANT-1: DOER: ‘il’ = ?
 RELATION: être(il, très fatigué); +static, +past, +durative
 LOGICAL RELATION: concession: il | fatigué › ~P(1-arg)
 COMPLEMENT: fatigué: il + fatigué
 discourse type: NARRATION/DESCRIPTION
 time: +past, +static

Sufficient details have been included to ensure a parsimonious representation. At this point, we do not know what the left argument will be, but we do anticipate that it will contain a verb, that it will indicate that an action has been carried out although the attribute value +fatigué, unified to the DOER is not completely compatible with the event(s) expected to be completed by the DOER. It is to be noted that DIG assembles more than structural or functional information. Also generated are: situational information⁴; logical information; temporal information; numerous intra-situational networks of relations (event-type, intra-lexical world knowledge, semantic field) which serve as constraints and checks for various forms of discourse consistency. In addition, DIG also involves the recording of anticipated input types and relations, in addition to recording the progress of logical type and pattern development.

Continuing with our example, we now process (17) below:

(17) *Pierre est allé à la réunion.*

Once *Pierre* is processed, the anaphoric link anticipated when *il* was processed can be specified since *il* and *Pierre* are feature-value compatible. Since *il = Pierre*, the PARTICIPANT has not changed, although it has been specified more clearly. Hence, the same situation is being developed. The new RELATION ‘aller(*Pierre*, {complement})’ is an event marked +process. This is compatible with the expected event which is not supposed to happen because the feature +fatigué, unified with *Pierre* when the

anaphoric reference resolution bound it with *il*, implies the potential negation of an event marked +process. Finally, the linker *à*, whose template resembles the template for *quoique*, triggers a prepositional phrase which is marked for direction and location because of attribute values attached to 'aller().' Thus, the situation has now developed into (again, only salient details are included for the sake of brevity):

- (18) PARTICIPANT: DOER: il = Pierre
 RELATION: 1. être(Pierre, fatigué);
 2. aller(Pierre, à la réunion)
 COMPLEMENT: 1. fatigué
 2. à la réunion

Logical type: concession

Logical Pattern: 1. P(r-arg) = être(Pierre, fatigué) : +negative
 2. P(l-arg) = aller(Pierre, à la réunion) → -
 fatigué
 P(r-arg) → ~P(l-arg)
 P(l-arg)

It is interesting that an explanation could be added seamlessly if the speaker/writer continued with, say, the linker *parce que*. It is also possible to follow this text with yet another concession by using a second *quoique* (or *bien que*) as in (19) below:

- (19) *Quoiqu'il fût très fatigué, Pierre est allé à la réunion quoique celle-ci ne fût pas très importante.*

The text, however, is becoming a bit bizarre for most speakers. Instead, let us end it with the terminator '.' (period). The terminator indicates that the text has arrived at complete closure. This triggers recursive closure of any structures not yet closed. It will also close the situation as well as the logical pattern triggered by the logical type CONCESSION. Since both arguments close correctly, and since their polarity values are compatible with the logical structure of CONCESSION, the logical type and pattern generated can be marked +complete. Once these various closures have taken place, information accumulated in the text is finalized in terms of the several types of information accumulated by DIG. It is always possible to continue with additional texts, each contributing information, organized as networked situations as described above. At times, the situations

themselves are networked, at times fused into composite, even nested situations, or generalized into higher-level more abstract situations. In this manner, DIG handles multi-sentential texts in a fashion quite analogous to how it deals with single sentence, or single fragment texts.⁵ Each 'higher' level triggers additional types of information, which, when combined, accumulate the information contained in the processed text.

3.2. *Additional remarks*

1. DIG processes words one at a time, and builds up structures. As soon as it is possible to assign an unambiguous functional role to a structure, the functionalized structure is integrated into the discourse stream as a discourse fragment. At this point, situations are generated and a number of networked relations, constraints and checks for various forms of consistency are activated. These various activities are based on simple unification (see Shieber 1986, Carpenter 1992, 1997).
2. The concept of situation in DIG differs from the situations defined in Situation Semantics (Barwise & Perry 1983). In DIG, situations are merely schemas for representing the basic conceptual structure relationships such as DOER, RELATION, COMPLEMENT. Additional information is added to indicate logical type and patterns being developed, temporal and aspect indications, especially as they pertain to event types. For instance, an event marked +static lends itself naturally to the discourse type NARRATION. It is possible for a situation to have its RELATION component indicated by a linguistic phenomenon other than a verb, but the usual RELATION indicator is a verb and its arguments. However, there is nothing barring the conversion of the final state of a DIG analysis into a Situation Semantic representation.
3. As has been already indicated, anticipation plays an important role in the DIG approach to information accumulation. In part, this is meant to meet the stringent time limitations imposed by the requirements of real-time natural language processing. It is also a claim that when humans learn a language, especially their first language, they are acquiring much more than vocabulary, morphology and syntactic rules. They are also actively learning about contexts, or situations to use DIG terminology, anticipations both of pattern and of input, strategy, constraints, late specifications and monitoring for consistency as well

as resolving various problems of structure ranges and domains, ambiguity, and pattern control. These hidden dimensions of text processing/(re)generating need to be taken into account when we formulate scientific text-linguistic theories, materials and tests in the context of language acquisition.

3.3. Another example

In this section, I will describe informally how DIG applies to an example taken from a paper by Villy Rouchota, a relevance-theorist (Rouchota 1996). I will, however, concentrate my remarks on the linker which occurs in this example. As we will see, there is a great deal of hidden ambiguity not apparent at first glance but that comes to light when scrutinized one word at a time for the information it yields. The example is taken from Rouchota (1996:3):

(20) *He votes Tory but I trust him.*

In this example, the linker *but* is a coordinating conjunction. Among its requirements is that its left argument and right argument agree in type or at least be compatible type-wise. The actual mechanics of how DIG establishes just exactly what constitutes the left and right argument for coordinating conjunctions will not be gone into here.⁶ Suffice it to say, that first the right argument must be finalized before its mirror left argument can be established. In this case, we have:

(21) r-arg = I trust him

(22) l-arg = He votes Tory

Two of the semantic attribute values of *but* are that it triggers negative implication and contrast between its two arguments. This can be represented as:

(23) $(P(l\text{-arg}) \rightarrow \sim P(r\text{-arg})) \wedge \sim \sim P(r\text{-arg})$

If (23) looks familiar that is to be expected because underlying it is the logical type: concession, since (23) simplifies to $(P(l\text{-arg}) \rightarrow \sim P(r\text{-arg})) \wedge P(r\text{-arg})$ which is the same as example (16) above. By substituting *although* and reversing the left and right arguments, we find ourselves back in the central topic of this paper: dealing with *quoique* or *bien que*. Rouchota's

example is no more than a disguised form of concession and can be rendered as:

(24) *Bien qu'il vote Conservateur, j'ai confiance en lui.*

which carries much of the flavor of:

(24') *Although he votes Tory, (nevertheless) I trust him.*

DIG establishes the r-arg *I trust him*, closes it, backtracks to find a subject and a verb, in this case *He votes Tory*, and sets it up as the left argument. Once that has been done, attempts to specify the semantic values of 'negative implication' and 'contrast' are made. This leads to the left argument negatively implying the right argument for the intermediate stage (25), then the contrast negates the right argument for the final stage (26):

(25) He votes Tory → I do not trust him (Remember: the r-arg has been established)

(26) He votes Tory → ~(I do not trust him) = I trust him.

It is also to be noted that DIG will also uncover other hidden ambiguities in this simple example. For instance, it is probably assumed that the subject is not a Tory, but this is not necessarily so. Thus, we have at least four ways of interpreting (26):

(26-a) He is a Tory and I am not. Still, I trust him.

(26-b) He is a Tory and I am a Tory also. I find it strange that he should vote Tory. I do not really trust Tories. But I do trust him.

(26-c) He is not a Tory and I am not either. Still, in spite of his strange choice, I trust him.

(26-d) He is not a Tory and I am a Tory. Why would he vote Tory? Still, I trust him.

There is a lot of ambiguity in both cases which has not been discussed. DIG allows the linguist to note these various cases of ambiguities and if the text ends as in (20), a DIG analysis allows the linguist to note each possible pathway and choose interpretation (24') as default case.

4. *DIG and Relevance Theory*

There are several properties which make DIG and Relevance Theory complementary, as alluded to in the introduction. First, the various links and constraints effected during intermediate information accumulation stages contribute to concretizing the relevance of each information situation as it develops. This amounts to a claim that intermediate contexts and constraints precede and thus generate relevance, an idea that supports one of Relevance Theory's fundamental claims, namely that as representations are constructed for utterances, anticipatory schemas are brought up which limit the possible encyclopaedic and/or lexical knowledge necessarily active at any given time (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995:Chapter 2). Second, we saw that linkers contain conceptual information as well as procedural information, just as indicated somewhat informally in Diane Blakemore's seminal work (Blakemore 1987) on the semantics and pragmatics of discourse linkers. For instance, *quoique* contains the semantic notions of 'concession,' 'implication of event non-occurrence' and 'realized event'; *pendant que*, for instance, contains the conceptual notion of 'parallel time,' etc. In addition, linkers contain arguments which are constrained by logical structure and which must effect various feature consistency checks. Allowing linkers both conceptual and procedural information enhances their capability to generate anticipated information requirements. This capability, in turn, results in a model which is more faithful to the claims of Relevance Theory since it simplifies the dynamics of intermediate situation creation. The main difference is that DIG makes use of decompositional lexical semantics and proceeds word by word rather than sentence by sentence without resorting to an intermediary level of logical form (LF). A more amply developed model of networked situation creation could serve as a formal basis for the construction of explanations.

5. *Conclusion: What do linkers link?*

We will now briefly address the question of what linkers, in fact, link. We have seen that in DIG, they link lexical information, attribute feature values through the process of unification, structures via functional role assignments, networked situational components and relations, semantic features, various relational links and constraints such as anaphoric links, logical pattern components and stages, delayed and/or edited feature specifications, anticipated words, structures, situational components, and

various relator arguments via functional role assignments and other relational links. More importantly, what we have shown is that the question that one must ask when discussing linkers is ‘What do linkers trigger?’ The answer to this question is that they trigger pragmatic procedures which create anticipated informational and structural schema that must be resolved to arrive at a successful final informational state in the left-to-right processing of a text.

Notes

1. A few requirements for a formal lexicon are described below in the examples. For a more thorough description of lexical entries designed to treat different phenomena in a left-to-right grammar, see Sévigny (forthcoming a).
2. In a fully fleshed out version, particles, fillers and commentators will also figure in the texts. The term ‘relationally’ is not very satisfying. It is meant to refer to the many ways words and structures can be in informational relationships with one another: lexically, structurally, functionally, situationally, logically, anaphorically, semantically and topically. Some of these will be described in the examples below.
3. Similar observations hold for *bien que* and *malgré que*, although there are differences in emphasis and focus which will not be explored here.
4. For a more detailed look at how situations are built up in DIG, see Sévigny (2002).
5. Thus the name of my approach: ‘*Discourse* Information Grammar,’ rather than simply Linguistic Information Grammar or something in that vein.
6. See Sévigny (forthcoming b) for a treatment of coordination in DIG.

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La co-occurrence des temps verbaux : Comment utiliser les occurrences du passé simple pour résoudre l'ambiguïté du passé composé

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1. Introduction

Une façon d'expliquer la différence entre le passé simple et le passé composé est de s'appuyer sur le fait que le passé composé se forme de la composition d'un auxiliaire et un participe passé là où le passé simple est une désinence du verbe. On motive la distinction en disant que le temps verbal composé est un morphème aspectuel et le passé simple est un morphème de temps (Touratier 1996, Hewson 1997). Hewson (1997: 55) remarque que, dans le français moderne, ce système de signification verbale s'est déstabilisé parce que le passé composé est utilisé comme un prétérit. Hewson (1997: 7) cite G. Guillaume à propos du fait que ce genre de déstabilisation du système n'infirme pas nécessairement l'approche systémique des significations des temps verbaux.

Comment décrire cette déstabilisation qui met le passé simple et le passé composé en co-occurrence? On pourrait se reposer sur le constat que le passé simple est un temps verbal désuet, utilisé seulement à l'écrit et en voie de disparition. Malgré cette distinction dans l'usage des deux temps verbaux, il semble impertinent de laisser de côté la considération de la relation du passé simple et du passé composé particulièrement quand on considère la fréquence avec laquelle le passé simple est utilisé à l'écrit. Cette considération devient d'autant plus importante quand on remarque que le passé simple et le passé composé apparaissent souvent en codistribution dans un même texte.

Je vais démontrer que cette codistribution se base sur une distinction pragmatique entre les deux temps verbaux. Je vais commencer par une analyse sémantique du passé simple et du passé composé. Ensuite, utilisant la première analyse comme point de départ, je vais motiver la distinction sémantique qu'on a faite entre les deux temps verbaux par une analyse pragmatique. Pour finir, je vais suggérer un moyen de désambiguïser les instances du passé composé en utilisant les occurrences du passé simple.

2. La synonymie du passé simple et du passé composé

Le passé simple et le passé composé démontrent un chevauchement de sens car ils peuvent souvent apparaître dans les mêmes contextes:

- (1) *A ce moment-là, des pas retentirent... La porte de la maison s'ouvrit et la terrible sorcière entra dans la pièce.*
- (2) *A ce moment-là, des pas ont retenti... La porte de la maison s'est ouverte et la terrible sorcière est entrée dans la pièce.*
(Vet 1999: 324)

Dans les exemples (1) et (2), le passé simple et le passé composé se substituent sans changer de sens. Dans les deux exemples ils situent une éventualité antérieure dans le temps au moment de locution.

Souvent on fait la distinction entre le passé simple et le passé composé en faisant appel à la règle des 24 heures, qui trouve son expression dans *La grammaire de Port-Royal*:

...Il y a deux sortes de prétérit; l'un qui marque la chose précisément faite, et que pour cela on nomme défini, comme *j'ai écrit*...; et l'autre qui la marque comme indéfiniment faite, et que pour cela on nomme indéfini ou aoriste, comme *j'écrivis*..., ce qui ne se dit proprement que d'un temps qui soit au moins éloigné d'un jour de celui auquel nous parlons; car on dit bien, par exemple, *j'écrivis hier*, mais non pas *j'écrivis ce matin*, ni *j'écrivis cette nuit*; au lieu de quoi il faut dire *j'ai écrit ce matin*, *j'ai écrit cette nuit*, etc.

(Arnauld et Lancelot 1997: 73)

Touratier (1996) présente de l'évidence qui montre que, même à cette époque-là, la règle des 24 heures était une construction sociale imposée à la langue qui n'était pas dans les intuitions des écrivains de l'époque. Dans la version du *Cid* de 1636, on trouve cet exemple où le Comte parle d'une insulte qu'il a faite à Dom Diègue quelques heures d'avant :

- (3) *Je l'avoue entre nous, quand je lui fis l'affront,
J'eus le sang un peu chaud et le bras un peu prompt.*
(Touratier 1996: 150)

Après la condamnation de l'Académie basée sur la règle des 24 heures, Corneille a changé le texte dans la version de 1660:

- (4) *Je l'avoue entre nous, mon sang un peu trop chaud,
S'est trop ému d'un mot et l'a porté trop haut.*
(Touratier 1996: 150)

Malgré ces corrections, il est passé sans changement sur d'autres vers qui ne suivent pas la règle:

- (5) *Je vous les envoyai tous les deux en même temps;
Et le combat cessa faute de combattants.* (Touratier 1996: 150)

Comme le passé composé, le passé simple peut apparaître avec l'adverbe *hier* ou dans des reportages des éventualités récentes:

- (6) *Hier, à la Maison Blanche, ce fut la journée Carter.*
(7) *La lutte entre Senna et Mansell fut constante depuis le départ.*
(Vetters 1996: 154)

Encore dans les exemples (6) et (7), les deux temps verbaux expriment le fait que l'éventualité exprimée par le verbe est antérieure au moment de locution. À partir de ce genre d'exemple Vetters (1996) conclut que la différence ne se trouve pas dans la dénotation logique des deux temps verbaux. Il est d'accord avec Kamp et Rohrer (1983) en disant que le passé simple exige que le temps s'avance là où le passé composé ne le fait pas nécessairement.

Il existe pourtant des contre-exemples à ce constat:

- (8) *En 1982, Luc s'installa dans la ville même où Charles Martel arrêta les arabes, en 732. Il y rencontra sa future épouse.*
(Gosselin 1996: 117)
- (9) *Marie chanta et Paul l'accompagna au piano.*
(Gosselin 1996: 117)
- (10) *L'été de cette année-là vit plusieurs changements dans la vie de notre héros. François épousa Adèle, Jean-Louis partit pour le Brésil et Paul s'acheta une maison de campagne.*
(Kamp et Rohrer 1983: 261)

- (11) *Jeanne fut malade pendant trois jours. Elle alla travailler.*
(Labelle 2002: 52)

Dans l'exemple (8) à cause de la proposition relative, il existe un ordre temporel entre les éventualités inverse à celui de la présentation des faits. Dans l'exemple (9), le sens du verbe *accompagner* force une concomitance temporelle des deux propositions coordonnées. L'exemple (10) est un peu plus complexe; la première phrase sert de localisation temporelle pour les éventualités décrites dans la deuxième phrase. Elles sont présentées en vrac sans qu'il n'y existe aucun ordre temporel établi entre elles sauf qu'elles sont toutes localisées dans l'intervalle déterminé par la première phrase. L'aspect verbal bloque la progression du temps dans l'exemple (11). L'éventualité de la deuxième phrase, *alla*, a lieu dans l'intervalle de l'état du prédicat *fut malade*.

En ce qui concerne la progression du temps, le passé simple semble être sensible à l'environnement syntaxique et sémantique des instances de son utilisation. Il est donc douteux que l'on puisse utiliser le critère pragmatique de faire progresser le temps dans le récit pour le distinguer du passé composé. À ce point dans la ma présentation, on voit que le passé simple et le passé composé partagent un sens, celui de situer une éventualité antérieure dans le temps au moment de locution, mais on manque un critère pour justifier l'existence de deux morphèmes séparés..

2.1. La distinction de sens entre le passé simple et le passé composé

Il reste à trouver un moyen de distinguer le passé simple du passé composé. Il en existe et on le trouve dans la considération des exemples (12) à (14). Le passé composé a un sens de présent accompli ou d'état résultant (qui comprend le moment de locution) :

- (12) *Je n'ai pas éteint le four.* (Vetters 1996: 157)

L'exemple (12) a besoin d'une contextualisation pour rendre claire sa valeur d'état résultant. Si la phrase est dite par le passager d'un auto pour expliquer l'inquiétude visible dans son visage, quelques faits en découlent. Ce que la personne veut dire, ce n'est pas qu'elle s'en inquiète parce qu'elle n'a pas fait l'action d'éteindre le four, mais que le four reste toujours allumé puis l'état allumé du four pose un danger de feu imminent à son domicile.

Le passé simple n'a pas ce sens d'état résultant:

- (13) ?? Marie arriva hier/ce matin (mais elle ne resta que quelques minutes).
- (14) Marie est arrivée hier/ce matin (mais elle n'est restée que quelques minutes).

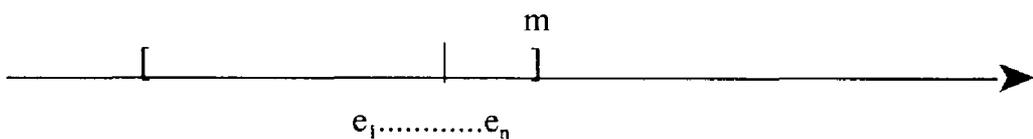
(Vet 1999: 325)

En voici le commentaire de Vet (1999: 325):

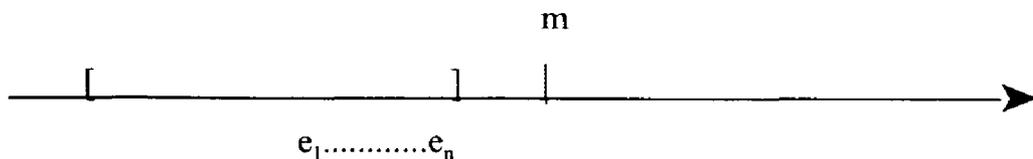
Notons d'abord que la seconde phrase que nous avons ajoutée entre parenthèses exclut que la première phrase réfère au résultat de l'éventualité, car ce résultat est annulé avant le moment de la parole: il n'y a donc pas d'[état résultant] au [moment de la parole] mais une [éventualité antérieure au moment de la parole].¹

Vet (1999) veut expliquer la différence entre le passé simple et le passé composé en disant que les deux impliquent un état résultant mais l'état résultant des instances du passé simple ne comprennent pas temporellement le moment de locution là où l'état résultant du passé composé le fait. Il représente ce 'contexte d'emploi' en utilisant des représentations aspectuelles sur une ligne de temps:

- (15) Le passé composé (éventualité antérieure au moment de locution)



- (16) Le passé simple



(Vet 1999: 328)

Il faut noter qu'on représente une séquence d'éventualités dans cette représentation, ainsi le 'contexte d'emploi' selon Vet (1999). Le contexte

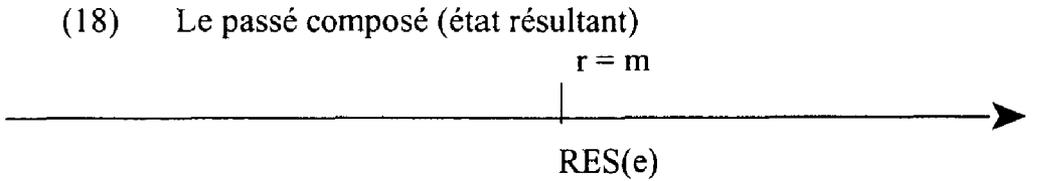
d'emploi est un contexte qui permet de regrouper un ensemble d'instances d'un temps verbal ayant une même valeur. Une représentation conforme au sens d'une instance des deux temps verbaux contiendrait une seule éventualité. Dans les deux exemples, e_1, \dots, e_n représente les éventualités (en séquence) modifiées par le temps verbal. Le moment de locution est noté m . Les parenthèses carrées représentent un intervalle qui représente un trait +deictique (là où l'intervalle termine après le moment de locution,) ou -deictique (là où l'intervalle termine avant le moment de locution. En utilisant ce trait, Vet (1999) veut capter deux phénomènes:

(17)

- i) La codistribution des temps verbaux avec des adverbes temporels qui est régie par la règle des 24 heures.
- ii) La fonction du passé simple de faire progresser le temps en isolant l'éventualité à un point de temps isolé des autres points où se situent d'autres éventualités exprimées dans le discours.

On a vu ci-dessus que ces critères sont très faibles dans la tâche de distinguer le passé simple du passé composé. Sans ces intervalles, les représentations des deux temps verbaux sont les mêmes.

La suivante est une représentation du passé composé dans son sens d'état résultant selon (Vet 1999):



En ce qui concerne le passé composé, il est un état résultant situé au moment de locution par la concomitance d'un point de référence reichenbachien et le moment de locution. Notons qu'il n'utilise pas le point de référence pour représenter ni le passé simple ni le passé composé dans son sens d'éventualité antérieure au moment de locution (Vet 1999: 329).

Sans les distinctions que Vet (1999) essaie de faire entre le passé simple et le passé composé dans leur sens d'éventualité antérieure au moment de locution, on se trouve dans la situation suivante. Le passé composé et le passé simple partagent un sens, celui noté ci-dessus. Le passé composé comprend un autre sens, celui d'état résultant.

3. Comment définir le sens du passé composé?

Il est tentant à distinguer le passé simple et le passé composé en acceptant de façon non-critique les résultats de la dernière section; c'est-à-dire que le passé simple et le passé composé situent l'éventualité avant le moment de locution, mais le passé composé a un autre sens que le passé simple n'a pas, celui d'état résultant.

Il reste une difficulté. Si on accepte comme principe que le sens d'un texte se constitue de la dénotation et *toutes les implications logiques qu'on peut dériver à partir de la dénotation*, la distinction faite ci-dessus n'est pas valable. Si on regarde les implications qu'on peut tirer des phrases où on substitue le passé simple pour le passé composé, on voit qu'il existe encore une différence qui doit être expliquée. Considérons les exemples suivants:

- (19) *Le Président de la République signa l'accord.*
 (20) *Le Président de la République a signé l'accord.*

Dans les deux exemples, l'objet du verbe *signer* est directement effectué de façon physique par l'action exprimée par le verbe. On peut donc tirer des deux exemples une même conclusion qui est valable dès que l'action est effectuée:

- (21) 'L'accord est signé'

Le passé simple et le passé composé ne diffèrent pas sur ce point. Mais si l'objet n'est effectué que de façon transitoire, on commence à voir des différences dans les inférences que l'on peut en tirer.

Quand on considère les implications logiques qu'on peut faire concernant l'objet, l'implication logique n'est pas en harmonie avec nos intuitions:

- (22) 'le fermier ferma la porte' implique 'la porte est fermée à un moment dans le passé'
 (23) 'le fermier a fermé la porte' implique 'la porte est fermée à un moment dans le passé'

Selon un calcul logique opérant sur des symboles, les exemples (22) et (23) sont tout à fait valides et vrais. Nos intuitions seront les suivantes:

- (24) 'le fermier ferma la porte' implique 'la porte pourrait être fermée ou ouverte en ce moment'
- (25) 'le fermier a fermé la porte' implique 'la porte est fermée en ce moment'

Qu'est-ce qui explique la différence entre les exemples (22) et (24)? Des facteurs contextuels entrent dans l'inférence. Dans l'exemple (22), on ne sait pas ce qui aurait pu arriver entre le moment de l'éventualité et le moment de locution. Une autre personne, un lutin ou le vent aurait ouvert la porte entre-temps.

L'exemple (25) ouvre la possibilité d'interpréter l'éventualité comme état résultant, qui assure, par la concomitance de l'état résultant avec le moment de locution, que les effets de l'action durent toujours. Il paraît que le passé composé dans son sens d'état résultant a pour effet de supprimer certains facteurs contextuels dans l'inférence.

Dans le contexte des exemples (24) et (25), les facteurs contextuels qui pourraient intervenir dans l'interprétation sont une série d'inférences faite à partir de notre connaissance du monde:

- (26) i. Les portes sont susceptibles à être fermées ou ouvertes par des êtres animés ou inanimés.
 ii. Plus le temps progresse, plus la possibilité qu'une porte a été maniée par un être capable de changer l'état ouvert/fermée de la porte.

Le passé composé, dans son sens d'état résultant comprenant le moment de locution, supprime la possibilité d'engager le processus inférentiel dans l'exemple (26). Notons qu'ici j'élargis la définition du sens d'un texte que j'ai fourni ci-dessus. Maintenant, je tiens à ce que le sens d'un texte est le résultat de l'interaction de la dénotation des éléments de signification et le contexte du texte.

Cette explication ne va pas assez loin. Je montrerai dans ce qui suit que ce n'est ni le fait le sens d'état résultant qu'un état obtient au moment de locution ni que l'état résultant supprime certains facteurs contextuels qui est important, mais que le passé composé dans son sens d'état résultant rend le moment de locution opératoire dans les inférences pragmatiques qui motive

l'existence du sens 'état résultant.' C'est cette interface avec la pragmatique qui motive le plus fortement la représentation aspectuelle d'état résultant.

Pour maintenir ces définitions des sens du passé simple et du passé composé, on doit avoir un moyen de soutenir le statut distinctif du sens d'état résultant du passé composé.

4. *Le passé composé et le principe de pertinence*

Reprenons les exemples (24) et (25):

- (24) 'le fermier ferma la porte' implique 'la porte est fermée'
 (25) 'le fermier a fermé la porte' implique 'la porte est fermée'

Si on accepte la possibilité que la porte soit fermée dans l'exemple (24), on peut décrire la différence entre les deux exemples comme une différence de force entre les deux implications. Comme on a dit ci-dessus, des facteurs contextuels influencent l'acceptabilité de l'implication dans l'exemple (24) alors on dit que l'implication dans l'exemple (25) a plus de force que celle dans l'exemple (24). Sperber et Wilson (1995:77) fournissent une description de comment la force des suppositions peut varier:

...Similarly, the initial strength of an assumption may depend on the way in which it is acquired. For instance, assumptions based on a clear perceptual experience tend to be very strong; assumptions based on somebody's word have a strength commensurate with one's confidence in the speaker; the strength of assumptions arrived at by the strength of the premises from which they were derived.

Il y a donc une différence dans la force des suppositions à la gauche des implications dans les exemples (24) et (25). D'où vient-il? On n'identifie pas une source convenable dans la citation ci-dessus. Sperber et Wilson (1995) continuent:

...the success of human non-demonstrative reasoning must be explained by appealing not to logical processes of assumption confirmation, but to constraints on the formation and exploitation of assumptions. Factual assumptions are acquired from four sources: perception, *linguistic decoding* [les italiques sont les miennes-LW],

assumptions and assumption schemas stored in memory, and deduction.

Dans le décodage de l'exemple (25), c'est le moment de locution qui fournit la force de l'implication. Un autre moyen de dire ceci est de dire que le moment de locution devient *pertinent* dans l'inférence pragmatique quand on utilise un passé composé dans son sens d'état résultant comprenant le moment de locution. Le concept de pertinence se lie à l'effort nécessaire pour mettre à terme une déduction pragmatique. Cette relation est définie par les principes de pertinence et pertinence optimale de Sperber et Wilson (1995: 270 et 158):

27. i. *The Principle of Relevance*

Every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance

ii. *Optimal Relevance*

(a) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.

(b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.

Pour voir comment la Théorie de Pertinence marche, passons à une analyse d'une strophe de Baudelaire citée par Touratier (1996:148):

- (28) (S1) *Ma jeunesse ne fut qu'un ténébreux orage*
Traversé çà et là par de brillants soleils;
 (S2) *Le tonnerre et la pluie ont fait un tel ravage,*
 (S3) *Qu'il reste en mon jardin bien peu de fruits vermeils.*

Dans l'exemple (28) l'occurrence du verbe *fut* et son complément décrit la jeunesse du poète, une situation S1 qui a pour résultat une autre situation S3 *il reste en mon jardin bien peu de fruits vermeils*. Comment se fait le lien entre les deux situations?

Dans (S2) *Le tonnerre et la pluie ont fait un tel ravage*, (S3) *Qu'il reste en mon jardin bien peu de fruits vermeils*, la situation S2 de dégât est le résultat des effets du tonnerre et de la pluie. Les éléments linguistiques qui expriment cette notion d'état résultant sont le verbe 'faire' en combinaison avec le passé composé. Cette situation fournit un contexte et est donc une

présupposition de la situation S3 exprimée au présent de l'indicatif. La relation de causalité entre le tonnerre et la pluie (l'orage) et le jardin presque dépourvu de fruits vermeils reste sur la concomitance temporelle au moment de locution de l'état de dégât et le manque de fruits vermeils.

Comparons l'exemple (28) à l'exemple (29):

(29) (S1') *Ma jeunesse ne fut qu'un ténébreux orage.* (S2') *Il reste en mon jardin bien peu de fruits vermeils.*

Dans l'exemple (29) la tâche de faire le lien entre S1' et S2' est beaucoup plus difficile parce qu'on manque un contexte d'interprétation pour S2'. L'exemple (28) satisfait mieux le principe de pertinence en faisant le lien entre S1 et S3 que l'exemple (29) grâce à S2 qui fournit un contexte pour S3 et permet la concomitance temporelle de S2 et S3. En effet, dans l'exemple (29), S2 de l'exemple (28) devient une implicite que fait le lecteur pour arriver à établir un lien entre S1' et S2'. Dans l'exemple (28), S2 est un élément explicite de l'argument présenté. Toutefois, l'implicite qu'est S2 de l'exemple (28) ne s'ajoute pas au sens explicite (l'explicitation) de S2' et reste donc implicite.

Remarquons que cette analyse nous donne une façon de parler de la distinction que (Vet 1999) voulait faire entre le passé simple et le passé composé. Vet (1999) essayait de parler du manque de rapports des éventualités au passé simple avec d'autres éventualités et le moment de locution en disant que le passé simple s'isole de façon temporelle des autres éventualités. Cet isolement Vet (1999) liait à d'autres phénomènes comme la codistribution avec les adverbes temporels dans la représentation sémantique du temps verbal. Au lieu de situer la discussion de la mise en rapport des éventualités au niveau de ces critères sémantiques qui centre sur l'insuffisance du passé simple à entrer dans ce genre de mise en rapport, je veux montrer que, du point de vue de la Théorie de Pertinence, Vet (1999) a raison, mais de façon partielle.

Le principe de pertinence nous donne une raison pour maintenir la distinction faite entre le passé simple et le passé composé. Le sens d'état résultant du passé composé est différent de l'implication d'état résultant à partir du passé simple en ce qu'il déclenche des effets pragmatiques pertinents là où l'implication d'état résultant faite à partir du passé simple, ne le fait pas. Le sens d'état résultant du passé composé persiste parce

qu'elle permet d'effectuer certaines actions pragmatiques de façon plus efficace. L'effet pragmatique sur lequel je vais me concentrer, c'est l'action de faire une relation entre le moment de locution et le sens de ce qui est dit pendant le moment de locution.

4.1. Les effets pragmatiques et le passé composé (ER) – deux exemples

Les effets pragmatiques que le passé composé déclenche se déploient autour de la pertinence du moment de locution dans le sens d'état résultant.

- (30) (S1) *J'ai dit dans le chapitre précédent* (S2) *qu'il régnait une très grande égalité parmi les émigrants* (S3) *qui vinrent s'établir sur les rivages de la Nouvelle-Angleterre.*
(Tocqueville 1966: 95)

Dans l'exemple (30) l'occurrence du passé composé figure dans une proposition qui constitue une métareprésentation linguistique. Selon (Wilson 2000:411) "A metarepresentation is a representation of a representation: a higher order representation with a lower order representation embedded within it." L'autre représentation est la description en discours indirect de ce que Tocqueville a dit dans le chapitre précédent.

Cette métareprésentation fait partie encore d'une autre métareprésentation, le livre que Tocqueville 'est' en train d'écrire. Pour représenter ces enchâssements des représentations et métareprésentations je vais suivre la Sémantique des Situations (Barwise et Perry 1999) pour articuler formellement les relations entre les représentations dans l'explicitation de l'énoncé dans l'exemple (30). Notons que l'explicitation, ce qui est explicite dans l'énoncé, est construite par un processus dénommé 'enrichissement libre' d'implicites qui s'ajoute au contenu sémantique de l'énoncé:

- (31) [S] |= S0 «livre» |= S1 «dire» |= S2 ∧ S3

La situation de base [S] est une situation réelle dans le monde qui soutient (le symbole '|=',) toutes les situations enchassées par d'autres opérateurs de soutenance. Le prédicat *ai dit* connecte le contenu de la métareprésentation S1 à la métareprésentation S0, le livre qui est en train d'être écrit, par une inférence à partir du sens d'état résultant du passé composé et le complément de *ai dit*, la description de ce qui a été dit.

L'usage du verbe *dire* au passé composé permet de reconstruire la métaphore *dire=écrire* de façon pragmatique en faisant le lien entre *dire* et le chapitre précédant.

Passons à l'autre exemple, tiré du *Petit prince*, de A. de St. Exupéry:

- (32) “*Dessine-moi un mouton.*”
Alors (S1) j'ai dessiné.
Il regarda attentivement, puis:
“Non! Non celui-là est déjà très malade. Fais-en un autre.”
 (S2) *Je dessinai.* (St. Exupéry 1999: 242)

Le texte est très régulier, avant l'ordre du petit prince la narration est au passé simple. La seule déviation est l'occurrence du verbe *dessiner* avec le passé composé, S1 après l'ordre du petit prince. La narration S2 après le deuxième ordre du petit prince continue au passé simple.

Dans cet exemple, le narrateur alterne l'usage du passé composé dans le texte pour démontrer son agacement avec le petit prince. Dans ce contexte, des attitudes du narrateur interviennent et se construisent sur les instances des temps verbaux en question. Dans la première instance du verbe *dessiner* S1, le narrateur exprime à partir d'un état résultant une relation intime entre les personnages qui est exprimée par la pertinence du moment de locution. Cette attitude fait partie de l'explicitation de l'énoncé enrichie par des implicatures (les étapes iii-vi):

- (33) Ce qui est explicite dans l'usage du passé composé:
 i. Le moment de locution est pertinent.
 ii. Le moment de locution est lié directement au contenu de la locution.

Suppositions qui viennent de la connaissance du monde:

- iii. L'amitié est un lien direct entre deux personnes.
 iv. L'indulgence vient avec l'amitié.

Raisonnement:

- v. Le lien entre le moment de locution et le contenu de l'énoncé est parallèle au lien de l'amitié entre deux personnes.
 vi. L'usage du passé composé exprime l'amitié et indulgence.

Par contre, le raisonnement pragmatique qui complète l'explicature de S2 est le suivant:

- (34) Ce qui est explicite dans l'usage du passé simple:
- i. Le moment de locution n'est pas pertinent.
 - ii. Le moment de locution n'est pas lié directement au contenu de l'énoncé.

Suppositions qui viennent de la connaissance du monde:

- iii. L'agacement place une distance entre deux personnes.

Raisonnement:

- iv. Le manque de liens entre le moment de locution et le contenu de l'énoncé est parallèle au manque de liens entre deux personnes exprimé par l'agacement.
- v. L'usage du passé simple exprime l'agacement.

Dans les deux cas que j'ai examinés, les exemples (30) et (32), le passé composé dans son sens d'état résultant comprenant le moment de locution met le moment de locution à la disposition des processus d'inférence. Les inférences dans (30) et (32) visent à faire des opérations pragmatiques de d'établir des relations temporelles et de reconstruire des métaphores dans l'interprétation à partir du contexte. Le point opératoire dans tous les exemples est la pertinence/non-pertinence du moment de locution dans le passé composé et le passé simple.

Je conclus que ce qui motive la différence sémantique (PS= 'éventualité antérieure au moment de locution' vs PC= 'éventualité antérieure au moment de locution' ou 'état résultant comprenant le moment de locution') entre le passé simple et le passé composé sont les effets pragmatiques qui concernent la pertinence (ou non) du moment de locution déclenchés par le passé composé dans son sens d'état résultant qui comprend le moment de locution.

5. *Comment utiliser les occurrences du passé simple pour résoudre l'ambiguïté du passé composé*

La différence de sens (pragmatique) entre le passé simple et le passé composé expliquée, il reste à expliquer comment utiliser les occurrences du passé simple pour résoudre l'ambiguïté du passé simple. Il est nécessaire de faire cette opération à chaque fois que l'on rencontre le passé composé dans un texte car quand on interprète un texte de gauche à droite que ce soit un humain ou un ordinateur qui est en train d'interpréter le texte, on n'a pas affaire à types d'expressions ou de morphèmes, comme quand on décrit la grammaire d'une langue, mais des instances d'emploi de ces types.

Quand le passé simple et le passé composé sont en co-distribution dans un texte, le passé simple a le sens d'éventualité antérieur au moment de locution et le passé composé au sens d'état résultant. Comment représenter ce fait? On pourrait inclure dans l'entrée lexicale du passé composé des instructions à effectuer à chaque fois que l'on rencontre une instance du passé composé. Les instructions seront de chercher le texte entier pour des instances du passé simple, et de choisir le bon sens du passé composé selon le résultat de cette recherche. Ce choix implique un grand effort de décodage dans l'interprétation d'un texte.

L'autre option est d'inclure les informations nécessaires à résoudre l'ambiguïté du passé composé dans l'entrée lexicale du passé simple. Dès qu'une instance du passé simple apparaît dans un texte, l'information nécessaire pourrait être incluse dans la représentation globale du texte pour agir comme filtre représentationnel sur les instances du passé composé.

La Sémantique des Situations de Barwise et Perry (1999) donne un moyen de représenter le contexte qui unit les occurrences du passé simple et du passé composé. La Sémantique des Situations fournit un moyen formel de parler des situations dans le monde. Les situations dans le monde deviennent les interprétants directs des expressions formelles dans la Sémantique des Situations, par la relation de 'soutenance' dont j'ai parlé ci-dessus. Les situations sont aussi un moyen de représenter le contexte d'interprétation des énoncés. Les situations comprennent ce que l'on appelle des 'restrictions' (marquées de façon formelle dans la notation d'une situation par 'RESTR'), qui sont des conditions sur la composition interne des situations. Par exemple, une restriction sur la situation 'feu'

serait qu'il faut y avoir de la fumée, une situation de 'feu' sans fumée étant impossible.

Quand le passé simple apparaît dans un texte, on peut supposer qu'il va y avoir une situation, S_0 , qui serait le contexte global d'un discours ou d'un segment du discours, que cela apparaît sous forme d'un discours parlé ou écrit. Pour le discours écrit, on peut dire que dès qu'une situation exprimée utilisant le passé simple s'unifie au contexte du discours, il ajoute à la SN une restriction sur les occurrences du passé composé :

$$(35) \quad S_0 = \dots \\ \text{RESTR} \quad \forall P \text{ PC}(P) \supset \text{ER}(P)$$

Là où PC = passé composé, et ER = état résultant comprenant le moment de locution.

S'il n'y a pas d'occurrences du passé simple dans un texte donné, le passé composé doit être désambiguïsé par d'autres moyens pragmatiques.

6. Conclusion

J'ai fait l'argument, comme Vet (1999), que le passé simple et le passé composé se distinguent par le fait que le passé simple a un sens temporel: éventualité antérieure au moment d'énonciation et le passé composé en a deux: éventualité antérieure au moment d'énonciation et état résultant. Dans ce travail, ce qui diffère de la position de Vet (1999) est que le sens d'état résultant comprenant le moment de locution du passé composé est motivé par les effets pragmatiques qui viennent de la mise à la disposition aux processus d'inférence du moment de locution. J'ai examiné des exemples où les effets pragmatiques qui proviennent de la pertinence du moment de locution sont deux: soit de limiter accès à certains processus inférentiels, comme dans l'exemple (25), soit de enrichir l'explicature des énoncés à partir du moment de locution, comme dans les exemples (30) et (32).

Cette différence dans les opérations pragmatiques déclenchées ou non par le passé simple et le passé composé est à la base de la différence entre les deux temps verbaux. C'est un fait qui donne du soutien à la position que les entrées lexicales contiennent des informations pragmatiques, étant

donné que le procès d'interprétation est un processus de décodage qui se déroule de gauche à droite et si on considère le sens fondamental d'un texte comme la dénotation de ses éléments primitifs, c'est-à-dire la signification des mots et la combinaison de ces significations dans la phrase, enrichis par des inférences faites à partir de la dénotation de la phrase et le contexte de communication.

Note

1. Dans la citation, j'ai remplacé des formules logiques par des expressions de la langue naturelle.

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A Cognitive Approach to Tense and Aspect in Coptic

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1. Introduction

This paper will examine the theory of tense and aspect developed for Indo-European languages in Hewson & Bubenik (1997) and apply it to Coptic, a non-Indo-European language of the Afro-Asiatic family. Within this theoretical framework, I will demonstrate that Coptic has five aspectual contrasts: potential, imperfective, perfective, iterative and prospective. I will further demonstrate that Coptic does not make morphological tense distinctions. The analysis presented here should be taken as preliminary; I intend to examine modal forms in a future paper.

2. Theory

The theoretical framework adopted for this paper is the Guillaumian approach developed in Hewson & Bubenik (1997) for Indo-European and subsequently applied to Turkish in Bubenik (1997), to Ruhaya in Hewson, Nurse & Muzale (2000) and to Swahili in Hewson & Nurse (2001). Within this cognitive framework, events can be perceived in the mind in two ways, which are called Ascending Time and Descending Time. The difference between them lies in whether one perceives time as a figure moving against a stationary background, or a stationary figure against a moving background.

The camera analogy used by Hewson (2001:75) illustrates the difference between Ascending and Descending Time as follows: a person is climbing a wall, while someone else films the ascent with a camcorder. Depending on the camera operator, someone viewing the playback of the tape on a television will see one of two possibilities. If the camera remained fixed on one point, the climber will appear to move up the screen against a stationary wall (Ascending Time). If the operator chose instead to follow the climber, then the wall appears to move downwards, while the climber apparently stays in one place; the beginning and end of the event cannot both be seen at once (Descending Time).

In Descending Time, the focus is on the internal progression of the event. At any given point inside the event, part of the action is complete, and part incomplete. The immanent or default aspect is imperfective, in which some part, but not all, of the action has been completed. Returning to the camera analogy, the imperfective aspect can be visualized by looking at the climber at any point in the ascent. An imperfective event taken all the way to completion is called a perfective, and represents a completed event (the climber is at the top of the wall, finishing his or her ascent). At the opposite end of the timeline is the potential aspect, which represents an action at its very beginning; no part of the action is represented as complete (the climber is just starting to climb).

In Ascending Time, the event is seen as a whole from beginning to end; the action cannot be subdivided. The default aspect in Ascending Time is called performative; this is the basic aspect of Germanic languages, as in English *I speak* or its Icelandic equivalent *ég tala*, both of which represent the event as an undivided unit (Hewson 2001:76).

It is possible to step completely outside the event to view the action before or after it happens. These aspects (referred to as transcendent, as they transcend the boundaries of the event) are called prospective and retrospective, respectively. The prospective can be visualized as the climber at the bottom of the wall contemplating the coming climb, and the retrospective as the climber standing on the wall looking back at his or her ascent (Hewson & Bubenik 1997:14, Hewson 2001:75).

The aspectual distinctions listed in the preceding paragraphs can be illustrated by the following diagrams in (1), in which x marks the position of the subject in relation to the event, the vertical bars show the beginning and end of the event, an arrow to the left indicates Descending Time, an arrow to the right indicates Ascending Time, the closely spaced dashes represent that part of the action already completed, and the widely spaced dashes the incomplete portion of the event:

(1)	Prospective	x	- - - - -	>	
	Performative		x - - - - -	>	
	Potential		< x - - - - -		
	Imperfective		< - - - - x - - - -		
	Perfective		< - - - - - x		
	Retrospective		< - - - - -		x

When applied to the Indo-European family, Hewson and Bubenik found that the three aspectual contrasts of the earliest Indo-European languages (referred to as the Present, Aorist and Perfect systems in traditional grammars) all reflect representations in Descending Time. Within a cognitive framework, the Present system conveys imperfective aspect, the Aorist has perfective force and the Perfect system carries retrospective meaning (Hewson & Bubenik 1997: 352).

Although this theory was developed in respect to Indo-European languages, it is equally applicable to other linguistic families, as well. This paper applies it to Coptic, the last stage of the Egyptian language. I intend to show that Coptic had five aspectual contrasts. In addition to the imperfective, perfective, potential and prospective described above, there was one other aspect in Descending Time, the iterative, shown in (2) below, which may be described as an open-ended, incomplete series of individual complete events. In other words, it represents an imperfective series of perfective events (the climber climbs the wall repeatedly or habitually).

3. *The general syntactic structure of the Coptic verb phrase*

The following example (3) and Figure A illustrate the basic, unmarked order of morphemes in a Coptic verb phrase. Although the tree structure given in Figure A is a simplified version of a Government & Binding syntactic model, it is intended merely to show the relative placement of tense and aspect markers, and not to make any definitive statements about the syntactic structure of Coptic, which lies outside the scope of this paper.

(2) Iterative | <-----x / <----X - - - > |

(3) *ne-a-pei-rōme* *š-kōt* *°n* *ou-ēi*
 PAST-PERF-this-man can-build ACC ART-house
 ‘This man was able to build a house.’

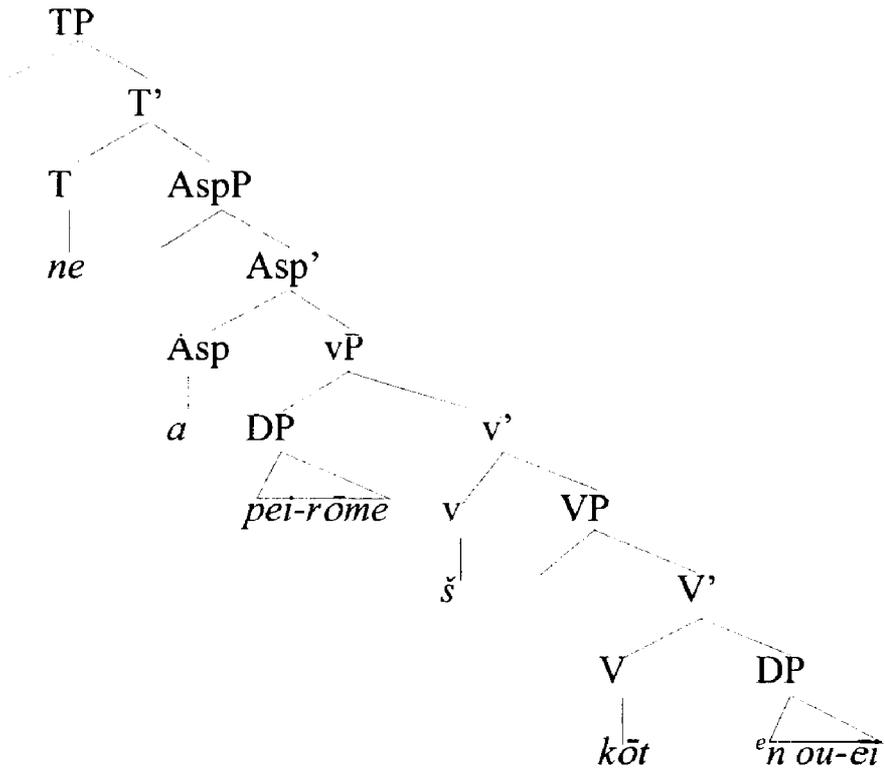


Figure A: The Coptic Verb Phrase

4. The cognitive approach applied to Coptic

4.1. Aspectual forms unmarked for tense

4.1.1. Coptic 'present tense' – imperfective aspect

The Present is the basic, unmarked form of the Coptic verb. It is universally described as durative (Layton 2000:233ff, Shisha-Halevy 1988:72ff) and is used to express ongoing action, enduring states and static situations. It can therefore be interpreted as expressing imperfective aspect and to be a representation in Descending Time. The action described by the verb is partially completed, but also remains partially incomplete. The imperfective has no characteristic morpheme; in Examples (4) to (6) this is shown by \emptyset - in Asp position.

masc	give-3
'He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them.'	
(Layton 2000:259)	

Historically, the Coptic Perfect is the descendent of a periphrastic expression using a form of the verb *do* (Till 1970: 159):

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| (10) | Middle Egyptian | Coptic |
| | <i>yw-f-sdm</i> | <i>a-f-sō̄m</i> |
| | do-3sg.masc-hear | PERF-3sg.masc-hear |
| | 'He did hear, he heard.' | 'He heard.' |

4.1.3. Coptic 'not yet tense' – potential aspect

This form indicates that an action has not taken place yet, but that the action is expected to occur eventually. No part of the action is represented as having been completed, instead there is merely the potential of completion. I therefore consider the 'not yet' form an exponent of potential aspect. The characteristic morpheme is *mpate-* in Asp position.

- | | | |
|------|---|------------------------------|
| (11) | <i>mpat-i-šō̄pe</i> | <i>m-monak^hēs</i> |
| | POT-1sg-become | ACC-monk |
| | 'I have not yet become a monk.' (Plumley 1948:104) | |
| (12) | <i>mpate-k-eiō̄r^h</i> | <i>m-p-^emton</i> |
| | POT-2sg.masc-perceive | ACC-ART-ease |
| | 'You have not yet perceived the contentment.' (Walters 1972:38) | |
| (13) | <i>mpate-ta-ounou</i> | <i>ei</i> |
| | POT-my-hour | come |
| | 'My hour has not yet come.' (Till 1970:161) | |

Examples (11) to (13) all contain an implication that the event described will occur.

This form of the verb, called 'not yet' (Lambdin 1983:138, Layton 2000:260, Shisha-Halevy 1988:43), '*pas encore*' (Mallon 1956:117) and '*noch nicht*' (Till 1970:242) was originally related to the negative of the Perfect tense, although it appears to me to function synchronically as a

separate aspectual category in Coptic. This is shown in (14) and (15) (Loprieno 1995:94-5):

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| (14) | Middle Egyptian
<i>bw-pw-f-sdm</i>
NEG-AUX-3sg.masc-hear
'He did not hear.' | Coptic
<i>°mpe-f-sō̄m</i>
NEG.PERF-3sg.masc-hear
'He did not hear.' |
| (15) | Middle Egyptian
<i>bw-yr.t-f-sdm</i>
NEG-do-3sg.masc-hear
'He has not yet heard.' | Coptic
<i>°mpat-°f-sō̄m</i>
POT-3sg.masc-hear
'He has not yet heard.' |

4.1.4. Coptic 'aorist or habitual tense' – iterative aspect

The name given this form in traditional grammars varies somewhat, as does the interpretation of its meaning. The literature seems to me to present two schools of thought on the Aorist/Habitual, although no clear lines may be drawn to separate them. Lambdin (1983:122), Plumley (1948:94-5), Till (1970:155) and Walters (1972:30-1) treat it as an iterative form referring to customary, habitual or repetitive actions and also to characteristic states. On the other hand, Layton (2000:261-2), Loprieno (1995:93) and Shisha-Halevy (1988:39) regard it rather as an aorist (in its literal sense of 'timeless'; not to be confused with the Indo-European aorist, which is a past perfective). To them, this form represents a general truth or situation which is not limited to any time reference. Iterativity and habitude, then, are merely contextual interpretations following from the basic meaning of timelessness.

My own interpretation is that the Aorist/Habitual is basically iterative in meaning. Repeating my description from section 2. above, the iterative indicates an imperfective or open-ended series of individual perfective events. The timeless interpretation adopted by Layton, Loprieno and Shisha-Halevy is not excluded, because Coptic does not have tense distinctions for reasons outlined in Section 5. below. The characteristic marker of the iterative is *šare-* in Asp position.

- (16) *šare-ou-šēre* °n-sop^hos eup^hrane °m-pef-eiō̄t
HAB-ART-son PRT-wise make.glad ACC-his-father
'A wise son makes his father glad.' (Layton 2000:262)

- (17) *šare-peu-pneuma ei evol*
 HAB-their-spirit go out
 'Their spirit is wont to go forth.' (Plumley 1948:95)
- (18) *ša-f-sō̄m e-n-šaje ʿm-p-noute*
 HAB-3sg.masc ACC-ART-word GEN-ART-god
 'He hearkens unto the words of God.' (Walters 1972:31)

4.1.5. Coptic 'future tense' – prospective aspect

The Coptic Future describes events which have not yet happened, but will happen in the future. Since Coptic does not distinguish tense as a morphological category (see below), the Coptic Future must be interpreted as aspect, instead. The best candidate is the prospective aspect, which describes events from a point in time before the event, i.e. refers to events to come. The prospective has a characteristic marker *na-* in *v* syntactical position, followed by the main verb in *V* position. The *Asp* position is left empty in this form. The prospective is therefore very interesting in terms of markedness, for two reasons. Aside from the unique position of the aspectual marker (in *v* instead of *Asp*), it is also unique in being the only representation in Ascending Time encoded in the Coptic verbal system. Synchronically, it can be regarded as a unique placement of the aspect morpheme. Examples (19) to (21) show the use of the prospective:

- (19) *Ø-ti-na-tounos-f ʿm-p-hae ʿn-hoou*
 Ø-1sg-PROS-raise-3sg.masc on-ART-last PRT-day
 'I will raise him up at the last day.' (Layton 2000:241)
- (20) *Ø-ʿk-na-pō̄t ʿnsa-p-jaje*
 Ø-2sg.masc-PROS-pursue ACC-ART-enemy
 'Thou shalt pursue the enemy.' (Walters 1972:31)
- (21) *Ø-se-na-č̣p-tēuʿn*
 Ø-3pl-PROS-arrest-2pl
 'They will arrest you.' (Plumley 1948:97)

Historically, the Coptic Future is a periphrastic expression consisting of the verb *go* (from Middle Egyptian *n 'y*) and a main verb, and is therefore parallel to the *go* or *aller* future constructions in English or French (Till 1970:122). Although *na* is in Coptic totally grammaticalized (Loprieno

1995:94), the fact that it originated as a periphrasis may explain the odd placement of the aspect marker.

5. *Tense in Coptic*

I have already alluded to the notion that Coptic makes no tense distinctions. I base this conclusion on a problem posed by the distribution of the morpheme *ne-*, commonly called the preterite converter. Each of the aspectual categories described in the preceding sections can be preceded by *ne-* which always appears in the T position. Most of the resulting forms have traditional names in the grammars: thus Example (22) shows what is called the Imperfect tense, (23) the Pluperfect, and (24) the Future Imperfect (Lambdin 1983). There seem to be no specific terms for the forms in Ex. (25) and (26). Shisha-Halevy (1988) refers to (22) to (26) as the ‘present converted,’ ‘perfect converted’ and so on.

- (22) *nere-Ø-pke-iōhannēs* *vaptize*
 PAST-Ø-also-John baptize
 ‘John was also baptizing.’ (Till 1970:160)
- (23) *ne-a-f-sōt̄m*
 PAST-PERF-3sg.masc-hear
 ‘He had heard.’ (Lambdin 1983:105)
- (24) *ne-^empat-ou-nej-iōannēs* *gar* *pe* *e-pe-št̄eko*
 PAST-POT-3pl-cast-John PRT PRT in-ART-prison
 ‘For John had not yet been put in prison.’ lit. ‘For they had not yet cast John into the prison.’ (Layton 2000:261)
- (25) *ne-šare-šlā*
 PAST-HAB.3sg.fem-pray
 ‘She used to pray.’ (Shisha-Halevy 1988:42)
- (26) *ne-Ø-f-na-mou* *pe*
 PAST-Ø-3sg.masc-PROS-die PRT
 ‘He was about to die.’ (Till 1970:161)

There is no similar morpheme to indicate future time, so at first glance, the distribution of *ne* in Examples (22) to (26) suggests a two-way tense distinction of past vs. non-past, in which *ne* can be taken as the marker of past time, as in (27):

(27)		-past	+past
	Imperfective	Ø-	<i>ne</i> -Ø-
	Perfective	<i>a</i> -	<i>ne</i> - <i>a</i> -
	Potential	^e <i>mpate</i> -	<i>ne</i> - ^e <i>mpate</i> -
	Iterative	<i>šare</i> -	<i>ne</i> - <i>šare</i> -
	Prospective	Ø-... <i>na</i> -	<i>ne</i> -... <i>na</i> -

However, the Coptic Perfect refers explicitly to the past; it cannot refer to the future, and therefore it does not operate like non-past perfectives in other languages like Greek, Russian or Georgian. Consequently, it cannot be a non-past perfective. Since the perfective *a*- can still be preceded by *ne*-, some accommodation in the tense system must be made, leading to the fundamentally flawed, unbalanced system in (28):

(28)		-past	+past	++past
	Imperfective	Ø-	<i>ne</i> -Ø-	—
	Perfective	—	<i>a</i> -	<i>ne</i> - <i>a</i> -
	Potential	^e <i>mpate</i> -	<i>ne</i> - ^e <i>mpate</i> -	—
	Iterative	<i>šare</i> -	<i>ne</i> - <i>šare</i>	—
	Prospective	Ø-... <i>na</i> -	<i>ne</i> -... <i>na</i> -	—

Obviously, a tense-aspect system with so many gaps is no system at all, so no meaning as simple as [+PAST] can be assigned to *ne*-. To solve this dilemma, it is necessary to abandon all notion of tense in Coptic, and place *ne*- in some other category.

If *ne*- is not a tense marker, and with no other morpheme that could possibly be a tense morpheme, it follows that Coptic does not encode tense as a morphological category. The five aspects I have defined all exist in a vast present, spanning all time from an infinity in the past to an infinity in

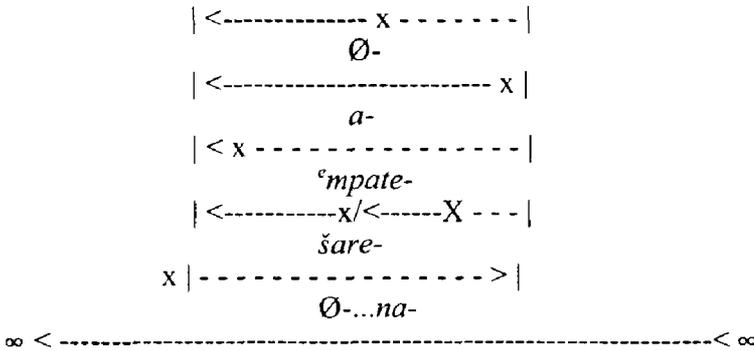


Figure B: Coptic Aspectual Distinctions

the future. This is illustrated by the diagram in Figure B. The large arrow in the centre of the diagram represents time as a vast, undivided present. It points to the left, as the nature of the Coptic aspectual system shows a strong preference for representations in Descending Time.

In the context of a vast present, it is possible to indicate the temporal location of an event aspectually. A perfective form, such as the Coptic Perfect, represents an event as complete. Logically, if an event is represented as being complete in the present, it must have been completed at some point in the past. This is why the Coptic Perfect can *function* as if it were a past tense, without actually being a past tense *per se*. Similarly, a prospective form which describes an event before it happens, such as the Coptic Future, can be used as if it were a future tense.

As to the question the status of *ne-*, I have found a possible parallel in Bantu. Within that family, Swahili has two imperfective markers, both referring to present time, but with very different scope. The morpheme *a-* serves as a general imperfective, covering all points of time. This contrasts with *na-*, which indicates a narrower, more focused imperfective, restricted to the immediate present, i.e. ‘here-and-now’ (Hewson & Nurse 2001: 96).

It appears to me that the Coptic *ne-* could act in a similar fashion, as a temporal focus particle, but would differ from the Swahili pattern in focusing on an explicit reference to a moment in the past rather than on the here-and-now. Thus, *neafsō̄m* in (23) is a more restricted or more focused expression than *afsō̄m* in (10), though both refer to past events.

6. Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis in the preceding sections, I conclude that Coptic has five aspectual categories (imperfective, perfective, potential, iterative and prospective). There are no tense distinctions; all aspects occur in a vast present. Both past and future are indicated aspectually by the perfective and prospective respectively. Specifically past events can be indicated by a focussing morpheme that restricts the temporal position of an event to memorial time, i.e. the past.

The overall tense/aspect system of Coptic is shown in Figure C.

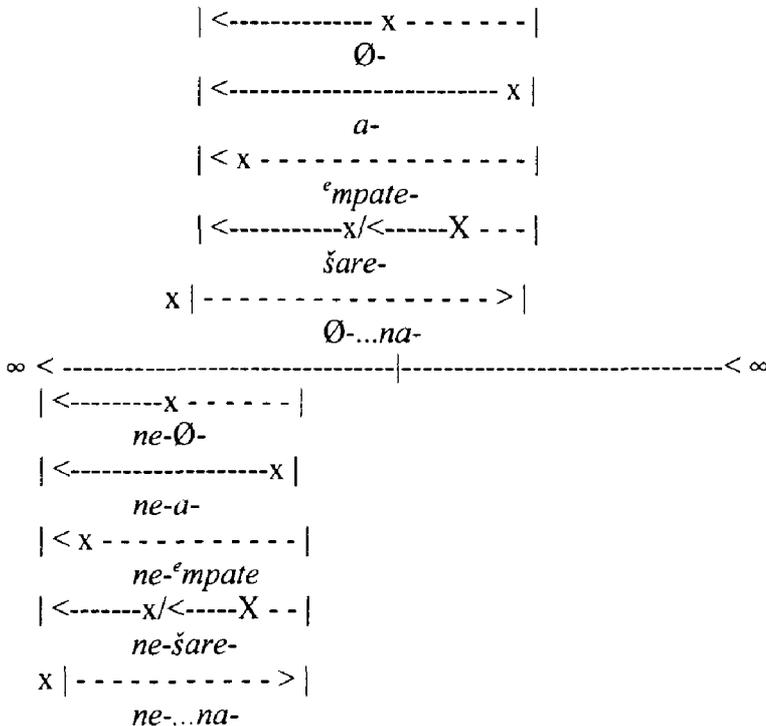


Figure C: The Coptic Tense/Aspect System

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